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DAME
MADGE KENDAL



DAME MADGE KENDAL AT HER DESK [Elliott & Fry.]

DAME MADGE KENDAL

BY
HERSELF

“Life is a comedy to those who look,
A tragedy to those who feel.”

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

TO speak one's part and, in so doing, to express one's personality is natural to all to whom, like me, "the stage of life" has so largely been the stage, behind the footlights.

For relieving me of the uncongenial labour of transcribing my reminiscences and for his skilful collaboration and advice, as well as for his unfailing helpfulness and courtesy in making this book what it is, I wish most cordially to thank my friend, Mr. Rudolph de Cordova.

MADGE KENDAL.

August, 1933.

EDITOR'S NOTE

IN preparing this volume of Dame Madge Kendal's reminiscences two difficulties had to be faced.

The first was the problem of arrangement.

Although it is not a biography, were these recollections to be presented in strict chronological order, or should they be done "suggestively," i.e. by letting one incident or personality suggest another.

After mature consideration, the latter course was adopted. Only in this manner did it seem possible to convey to the reader the full flavour of the inimitable personality whose memories and the record of whose life were to be chronicled.

The experience will thus, it is hoped, be afforded to the reader of feeling that Dame Madge is speaking to him as the spirit moves her, although he is, unhappily, of necessity, divorced from the magic of the presence that held enthralled the English speaking theatre of two continents.

The second difficulty was the restraint imposed by Dame Madge herself.

Nearly every volume of reminiscences invariably contains recollections of *causes célèbres* with which the subject was, no matter how remotely, connected, and with scandals of which the subject was, no matter how incorrectly, informed.

Such elements had to be rigorously excluded from this volume. It therefore offers no tainted food, no malicious stories of the dead to wound the susceptibilities of the living.

Dame Madge Kendal holds unalterably that just as, during her active life on the stage, she protected, so far as she could by practice and precept, the fair fame of her

calling, so in her reminiscences she is determined to omit all reference to unsavoury details which gossip may have associated with the private life of any of the people she met, and thus do what lies in her power to keep unblemished the best traditions of the stage of which she has always been so conversative an adherent.

I may be pardoned, I hope, if I venture to express the pride I feel in having been entrusted with the preparation for the press of these reminiscences of the woman who has been admitted by the chief connoisseurs of acting to be the greatest actress of her time and who is also one of the most striking figures of her generation.

In claiming these positions for Dame Madge Kendal I merely echo what was said of her when she graced the stage and illuminated its art by performances which can never have been surpassed.

To-day, still, happily, in the plenitude of her mentality I may, alike in admiration and in truth, quote the sonnet I wrote to her after she had retired from the stage.

The greatest actress of your time and age !
In that short phrase your comrades all attest
Your pride of place that ranks you with the best
Of those who've made the history of our stage.
With simulated grief you could assuage
Real grief, born of love's loss and soul's unrest ;
And add to joy a rarer, happier zest,
For you held laughter captive in a cage.

Imagination gilded all your art,
Inspired the playing of your every part,
So that, as Kean by lightning flash revealed
The glories Shakespeare had in words concealed,
You showed us in pellucid, radiant light
The modern woman's soul-aspiring flight.

RUDOLPH DE CORDOVA.

CHAPTER I
MY PARENTS

THAT I was born may be accepted as a fact. I have been told I was present on the occasion, but I have no recollection of it. So it is not evidence.

I accepted it on the assurance of my father and mother and there is a certificate to that effect. That I know, for it was copied on the register of my one marriage, for I have had only one husband.

The only circumstance I should like to emphasise about my birth is that, as I wrote to Sir George Higginson on his one hundredth birthday, I was *not* born in a monastery or reared in a convent.

When I came to London to play grown-up parts, there were half a dozen leading ladies enthroned in the hearts of the public and I had to battle against them all for its favour.

These ladies were all beautiful. Perhaps the most beautiful was Lilian Adelaide Neilson whose Juliet was one that filled the shops with her photographs, and deservedly so. The rich, Southern warmth radiated from her personality and her name will, for a long time, be associated in theatrical history with that character.

To the credit of her memory, let it be said that in her will she left part of her fortune to form a fund for the poorer members of the profession who might fall on evil days. It is a fund which still does admirable work.

It is not only the unfortunate members of our profession to whom actors and actresses give their aid. I have always contended that ours is the most charitable profession in the

world. Its charity is not confined to giving its services to other deserving causes which solicit its help, for it also opens its arms to people who want to enter its ranks, even people who may have stumbled in their path, whether in the high ranks or in the less exalted places of life.

On the other hand, I have one fault to find with my profession. Taking them "by small and large," I should say that most of the people in the world of the theatre are ungrateful.

Authors do not give credit to the actors who make their reputation, just as actors are not grateful to the people who have taught them what they know. I have taught many actors and actresses the early part of their business,—what is called the ground work,—and I have never been thanked by anybody except Seymour Hicks.

I mention this fact, for I have had many imitators. Probably that is why the profession does not stand as high as it did, for though imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, we should remember the famous proverb, "All that glitters is not gold."

I can truly say that, beautiful as the leading ladies were when I came to London, I was not jealous of them professionally ; for I was wildly enthusiastic in my work and always thought more of the effect I was producing on the audience than of myself. That idea had been inculcated in me from my earliest youth. I may, indeed, have inherited it, for my forbears had for generations been actors. Over two hundred years ago, my great-great-grandfather, James Robertson, who is frequently mentioned in the memoirs of Tate Wilkinson, was a much esteemed dramatist and actor. He was connected with the York circuit which then shared the chief position in the world of the theatre with the Bath circuit.

His son, J. W. Robertson, my grandfather, a very handsome man, as a portrait of him which is extant attests, was a co-lessee of the Peterborough Theatre which was part of the Lincoln circuit. This included, in addition to Lincoln and



MY GRANDFATHER

Peterborough, Wisbech, where my brother Tom, the dramatist, was born, Grantham, Boston, Spalding, Huntingdon, Newark and Grimsby, where I first saw the light of day.

In each of these eight towns one or other of my ancestors built a theatre and the Robertson company used to travel through the circuit.

In time, my great-uncle, who was known as "Old Tom Robertson, the Mogul," succeeded to the property. On his death, it was left to his widow, but the active management was really done by her nephew, William Robertson, who was my father.

Mrs. Tom Robertson must have been a remarkable woman, with a high sense of honour. She kept a careful diary and writing of the Oundle Theatre she says, "The theatre has been open four nights and the business bad. I fear I shall again lose a heavy sum, and if so I think I shall sing, 'Oundle farewell.'"

The song was not sung, for on a later page she wrote :

The great excitement of the week is over and within a few pounds of last year. Bad enough, 'tis true ; but I am grateful even as it is. I have sent £20 to Boston, £20 to Newark, and £5 to Wisbech, so there is £45 debt paid. God give me the means through His Mercy to *pay everyone and I will ask no more.*

My father is mentioned in Macready's diary in reference to that great actor's engagement at Louth in 1834. On the first night of his engagement when he was to play Virginus, he wrote :

When I was ready to go on the stage, Mr. Robertson appeared with a face full of dismay ; he began to apologise, and I guessed the remainder. "Bad house?"

"Bad, sir ! there's no one !"

"What, nobody at all?"

"Not a soul, sir, except the Warden's party in the boxes."

"What the devil ! Not one person in the pit or gallery?"

"Oh, yes, there are one or two."

"Are there five?"

"Oh, yes, five."

"Then go on ; we have no right to give ourselves airs if the people do not choose to come and see us ; go on at once !"

Mr. Robertson was astonished at what he thought my philosophy ; being accustomed, as he said, to be " blown up " by his stars when the houses were bad.

Great actor as he was, Mr. Macready could evidently not prevail against the conditions which then existed in Lincoln.

My father always had to be ready to act any part for which no suitable actor was available and his quick sense of humour was always as ready to be exercised.

A night or two later, " As You Like It " was in the bill, with Macready as Jaques and my father had to play the Banished Duke.

Again the house was bad. When he came to the lines,

This wide and universal theatre
Presents more woeful pageants than the scene
Wherein we play in,

which are the prologue to the famous " Seven Ages," speech, he changed the words to " This wide and almost empty theatre."

What Mr. Macready said is not recorded, but it can be imagined.

On another occasion when playing Nicodemus in Virginius, and interrogated on a matter of grave importance by the villain Appius Claudius who asks, " Who says this ? " instead of replying, " I her uncle Nicodemus, he answered, " I, her uncle Deuteronomy ! "

Consternation on the stage !

Closely associated with Macready was Miss Helen Faucit (Lady Theodore Martin), for she was his leading lady.

She was long before my time, but my father was greatly impressed by her acting and told me that when she played Juliet, the way she spoke the line,

Dost thou love me ? I know thou wilt say " Ay,"

was one of the most delightful reminiscences of his youth.

She asked the question anxiously and slowly, and before Romeo could reply she answered it quickly, herself.

She and her husband worshipped one another. She

consented to marry him on one condition—that she should continue her stage career for one month every year. Her reason was that she had three relations, all delicate, whom she took care of. So she used to act in Edinburgh and Glasgow where she made sufficient money to provide for them.

She always acted at the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, where Mr. Robert Wyndham gave her the Green Room of the theatre for her dressing-room. When she arrived, he always met her at the stage door with lighted candles in a branched candlestick and bowed her to the room, in exactly the same way as Mr. Buckstone used to receive Queen Victoria at the Haymarket and conduct Her Majesty to the royal box.

Sir Theodore was so devoted to Lady Martin that when she came on the stage for the first time in the evening he used to rise in his stall and bow to her. She had a beautiful character which revealed itself in her smile.

My husband and I used often to meet her and Sir Theodore on Sundays at the house of Sir Charles Foster. I remember when I first met her, her manner seemed rather alarming. It soon disappeared, however, when she found how gratified I was at meeting her.

When she died, I was invited to attend her funeral. I did not go, because funerals affect me very greatly. On the following day, however, I took my floral tribute to her grave. On the card I had written two words, "Our Example."

Sir Theodore had evidently read this card, for he wrote me one of the most beautiful and touching letters I ever received.

Here I run away from the subject and I suppose everybody will be shocked at me, but shocked they must be, for I am writing of life in general as well as my own life and expressing my feelings as truthfully as I can.

Death is now being associated with memorial services which take place every day for people one has hardly ever

heard of. Old friends constantly insist on my attending them by saying it would look invidious if I were away.

When, yielding to their views I do go, I am met by a battery of snap-shotters assembled outside the church to take the pictures of the people they regard as celebrities.

I have never loved snap-shotters. On the contrary. I deprecate their mission under every circumstance.

At the funeral of Sarah Bernhardt, at the centenary of Sarah Siddons, even in the church, the snap-shotters are looking at everybody entering and telling the onlookers who the arrivals are, to the accompaniment of comments as to how different they look when they are on the stage.

On leaving the church the crowd assumes the characteristics of a party.

Not long ago, one woman came up to me and said, "Oh, my dear, I *have* enjoyed myself. I've seen everybody I've ever read of or seen in the theatre." Then she asked anxiously, "Did you get a good seat?"

I replied, "I did," whereupon she returned, "I didn't see you."

"I am very sorry," I answered. "Did you know the corpse well?"

"Oh, no," she replied. "I didn't know her at all."

"Well," I said. "As you didn't know the corpse, I can't tell you what my feelings are regarding her, but I am sure you will be very glad to know I had a very good seat; it was almost touching the coffin. I know you'll envy me."

If you don't reply to such people, they think you are giving yourself airs.

If you do reply, you give yourself agonies.

Another great actor of whom my father told me and with whom he acted was Edmund Kean, at the celebration of the centenary of whose death on May 15th last I had the privilege of laying a laurel wreath at the foot of his statue at Drury Lane Theatre, by the invitation of the Board of Directors.

On one occasion he played Macbeth at the theatre in Lincoln and my father said that his voice rang like a clarion until the very rafters reverberated.

One effect he made was startling in its revelation of his conception of the part. In the last act, when Macbeth rushed on the stage and spoke, "Hang out our banners on the outward walls," he shouted the command in a voice like thunder. Suddenly he paused, dropped his double-handled sword to the ground and leaning on it, whispered, "The cry is still they come, they come," at the same time seeming to become ashy grey with fear, for according to him Macbeth, although spoken of early in the play as "Bellona's bridegroom," and the quintessence of bravery, had become a moral coward through having steeped himself in sin by the murder of Duncan, Banquo and Macduff's wife and children.

It is this kind of sudden transition, no doubt, that inspired Coleridge's famous phrase, "To see Kean was like reading Shakespeare by flashes of lightning."

A striking picture of the actor's condition in those days was painted by my father in an unpublished manuscript which he entitled, "The Actor's Social Position." "The most painful penalty of an actor's social position," he writes, "results in its isolation from every community of interest with others that form and cement the elements of mutual protection."

It is a striking contrast to the actor's position to-day when young men and women who have attained no great prominence in their profession are seen nightly at the most up-to-date supper rooms and clubs, appear at every important function, and are courted in society.

My mother's maiden name was Margharetta Elisabetta Marinus. She was the daughter of Dutch parents and I have heard she was born near The Hague. On the other hand, I have an idea, derived from I know not what, that she was really born in London. This may well be true, for her father, who was an excellent linguist and spoke

several languages fluently, came to England and settled down as a teacher of languages. He must have spoken English remarkably well, for my mother did not have a trace of a foreign accent.

How she came to go on the stage I never heard, but when she was seventeen she became a member of my great-aunt's company and it was in that way she and my father met.

After some years the Lincoln circuit failed, my father and mother came to London and joined Mr. J. W. Wallack in partnership at the Marylebone Theatre which had been opened by Mrs. Warner, about whose talent Charles Dickens was very enthusiastic.

In those days the Marylebone was a house of no inconsiderable importance, for Mrs. Warner, who had been a member of the company of Samuel Phelps, carried his tradition from Sadler's Wells to the Edgware Road. When the theatre came into the management of my father and Mr. Wallack it maintained its reputation, for one of the critics of the time wrote :

It may be asserted without reserve that there is not a more respectably managed theatre in London than the Marylebone Theatre under the present management ; that at few theatres in London can pieces comprising a greater number of characters be more adequately represented ; and that the inhabitants of St. John's Wood who travel elsewhere for an evening's amusement may possibly " go farther and fare worse."

It was here I made my debut on the stage on February 20th, 1854, a month before I completed my fifth year.

The part was Marie in "The Struggle for Gold." It was followed by a part in "The Orphan of the Frozen Sea," Jeannie in "The Seven Poor Travellers," The Small Pica in "Tit-Tat-Toe," and the Child in "The Stranger."

Of these performances I have no recollection, but my father and mother always told me an incident which has been widely chronicled when I played Jeannie, a blind little girl.

For this part I was given a pair of new shoes.

This was a cause of great excitement, for as the youngest I had always been the wearer of "old clo" of all sorts, and I was so proud of my new shoes that, forgetting I had been told I must keep my eyes closed while I was on the stage, I opened them wide and catching sight of my nurse in the pit, I went down to the footlights and exclaimed, "Oh, Nursey, look at my new shoes," to the consternation of the actors on the stage and the delighted laughter of the audience.

This nurse, a Lincolnshire woman, whose name was Susan, had lived with my parents for many years and was very devoted to them and to us children. Indeed, my earliest recollections of her are that she shared everything with the family.

She was engaged to be married for many years and as she could neither read nor write she used to get me to read her love-letters to her when I was about nine or ten. I was a mischievous little brat in those days and I used to make up all sorts of wicked nonsense which I read out to her with a very serious face.

Eventually the wedding day was fixed. At the ceremony in the church my father gave her away, and she went off home with her husband.

At six o'clock in the evening there was a knock at the door and Susan walked in.

"Hullo," said my father. "What are you doing here? I thought I gave you away this morning. You ought to be with your husband."

"Oh," she replied. "I've only come back for an hour, for I don't believe anybody can wash and do Madge's hair like me."

Upstairs, therefore, I was marched and duly washed and brushed. Then, she said good night and went back to her husband.

Until the day of her death she was a faithful friend of the family.

When I think of her I cannot help contrasting her with

the ladies who wait on us to-day,—with knees uncovered, throat exposed, hair cut short and their eyes invariably covered with spectacles, who have never offered to give up their afternoon and evening out.

What my own dear Susan would have said to them or they have said to her, only the angels in heaven would be able to record.

Not very long after my debut, I was taken to the theatre to see my elder sister Bessie act in "The Maid and the Magpie," a play which was then very popular.

Her part was that of a girl who was unjustly accused of the theft of a silver spoon, and she was arrested by a policeman. The moment he placed his hand on her shoulder, I shouted from my seat in one of the boxes, "Mr. Policeman, please don't touch my dear sister Bessie. I saw the magpie take the spoon."

The audience rocked with laughter as my childish voice rang through the house, even though my interruption ruined the play.

An episode in the life of the same dear sister furnished our brother Tom with the embryo of the plot of "Caste," for, as a realistic writer, instead of relying entirely on his imagination for his plots, he founded them on real incidents and then developed them imaginatively.

My sister was a very pretty girl and was filling an engagement in a provincial town in which we were living and in which a regiment was quartered.

One of the officers fell in love with her,—as officers had fallen in love with beautiful actresses for hundreds of years before, and as they will, no doubt, be doing hundreds of years hence.

So enamoured was the young man that, in order to get the chance of seeing and talking to her, he actually called on our father and arranged to have lessons in elocution.

The young officer's mother, a typical *grande dame* of the old regime, very proud of her family, very proud of her

social position, very proud of her son, was horrified at the possibility of what she regarded as a *mésalliance*.

She furnished the idea which my brother elaborated into the Marquise de Saint Maur, who has a long speech in which she describes her ancestry and her pride that it is mentioned in the famous "Chronicles of Froissart."

I don't know whether the real old lady had ever heard of Froissart or his Chronicles, but one day, as in the play, in order to find out all she could about my sister and our family, she called on my father, who, on hearing her story, assured her that he not only disapproved as highly as she did of the possibility of such a marriage but also that he found her son incapable of learning anything that he could teach.

In the end, an engagement in the theatre of another town was secured for my sister and the incipient romance was nipped in the bud.

There is an interesting sequel. That young officer remained single for many years, then he married and lived happily with his wife until she died early this year.

Eventually my sister married a man who was an officer in the Navy. I was only about four years of age at the time, and when he called at the house, one day, I had my face washed and a clean pinafore put on in order to go down to the sitting-room where he was.

My father put me on his knee and I screamed violently until I was allowed to get down. When, years later, her husband deserted my sister, my father, recalling the incident of my childhood, said, "The General knew."

He always called me "the General" almost from the time I can remember, because he said that although I knew nothing, I was always able to make people believe I knew everything.

I do remember, however, his telling me that according to the Scottish legend, I, being the nineteenth child (of the same parents) who lived to be a woman, would be a mascot and bring luck to everyone for whom I wished it.

My sister had a most exquisite disposition and I adored her. She had an only child, a daughter named Annie, through whom I received a lesson in maternity which I never forgot.

One night my sister woke me up suddenly at ten o'clock to tell me that Annie's birthday was the next day and that she had promised the child a doll which she had not been able to get before. As she stood by my bed, I noticed that she was fully dressed to go out and as soon as I was ready she took me with her to a shop she knew and knocked at the door until it was opened. After much trouble, she persuaded the proprietor to let her have a doll which she carried home in triumph saying to me, "I am so thankful I have got this doll, for a child must never be allowed to lose its faith in its parents' promises."

When, years later, I became a mother, I always remembered this incident.

A parent's promises are usually fulfilled, for parents nurse their children through illness, teach them their daily prayers, work to educate them ;—sometimes hundreds of pounds a year are spent to attain this desire.

Oh, the promises that parents make to themselves that their children never fulfil !

My idea of God Almighty has always been that He holds an enormous pair of scales in which He weighs us all, and then gives us as much pain as we can bear by dashing our hopes, our ambitions and even our maternal love until it becomes atrophied by insult and neglect.

That is our Garden of Gethsemane through which,—high and low,—we have to pass, enduring the most poignant shafts and agonies until our dreams are dispelled, and we emerge with clenched hands and teeth into what we call "Our World."

This dear sister died of cancer, the agonising pain of which she bore with her usual serene gentleness. Whatever one did for her during her illness she always declared to be perfect. I remember making a rest for her poor arm when

it began to swell and the way she spoke of the comfort it gave her one would think I had made a marvellous invention. Again, if I gave her a bunch of grapes, the flavour she always declared was incomparable.

In Boston, Lincs, my mother had an old and dear friend who was engaged to Mr. Henry Compton, a young member of the Lincolnshire company who later became a very famous actor at the Haymarket Theatre.

After a time, Mr. Compton left the Lincolnshire circuit to go to Bath or Liverpool where he met Miss Emmeline Montague, a brilliant actress who was a great favourite.

The fire of this passion burned out all remembrance of his first love. He married her and they had a very large family.

My mother's old friend used to come to see us very often, and patting me on the head would say, "I quite forgot to bring you any sweetmeats, my dear." One day when my mother was speaking about her, I said, "I don't like her, mother, for she always forgets to bring me any sweets." On the next occasion when her friend came a bag of sweets was given to me without the "forgot" speech.

I took the sweets but I always suspected that my mother had bought them.

Later on, this lady married a very rich man in Boston, and while I was still a little girl and was given a holiday I used to be sent to stay with her and her only daughter who was a couple of years older than I was. We became friends as children and our friendship has continued until this very day. She is the oldest friend I have in the world.

In those days they kept a great many horses and it was there I first learnt to ride.

On one occasion, when I was being prepared for one of these visits, I entreated my mother to lend me the jet necklace and bracelets,—they were two inches wide,—which she used to wear. She gravely informed me they were not appropriate to a child of my age who was paying a visit to friends.

“Oh, but mamma,” I said, “they’ll look so nice if I can put them on.” Eventually, they were put in what I grandiloquently called “my jewel-box,” which was carefully locked. I was given the key and placed it carefully in a pocket in my dress.

On the journey I lost the key and on arriving at my destination the box had to be broken open !

When my mother’s friends saw the jet ornaments, they laughed so heartily that I became very angry and never put them on. So pride had its fall and punishment.

Among my father’s friends at this time was a gentleman with a large nose with warts on it. The first day he was coming, my mother, knowing my outspoken nature, said to me, “Daisy, your father has an old friend coming to see him ; you are not to keep looking at him, as you look at strangers as a rule, and on no account whatever are you to look at his nose.”

“Darling,” I replied enthusiastically, “of course, I won’t.”

I need scarcely add the end of the story, for it tells itself. The moment the gentleman came in, I never for one instant took my eyes off his nose. At dinner I was much too fascinated by it to eat a mouthful. My mother coughed and tried several times to get me to look at her or at my dinner.

In vain. One thought, one charm possessed me,—that nose with the warts on it !

At last my father and his friend left the dining-room. As soon as they were gone I beat a hasty retreat and went to my own room. Later, when the visitor had departed, my father called me downstairs. “I don’t want to come downstairs, daddy,” was all I replied.

Eventually he came up. “Your mother wishes to speak to you,” he said.

“But I don’t wish to speak to my mother.”

When, however, he assured me that my mother was not angry but only ashamed of the way I had behaved I ran

down to her and said, "Mother, are you really cross with me?"

Roaring with laughter, she replied, "Certainly not."

Thus re-assured, I turned to my father and said, "Daddy, is that gentleman really a friend, or is he what you call a comedian with a funny nose?"

"No, my child, he's not a comedian," said my father grimly, "he's a tragedian, *mais, Dieu merci*, he's never been on the stage."

The sequel to my Boston friend's mother's romance is beautiful. When Mr. Compton retired from the stage, my husband thought that it was a proper thing that his services should be recognised by a great testimonial and I was put on the committee to gather subscriptions.

My first thought was of the story my mother had told me when I was a child of his love for her friend. I wrote to her and told her of the projected testimonial. By return of post she sent me a cheque for one hundred pounds, accompanying it with a strict injunction that her name should never be mentioned and that in the subscription list it should be entered as "Auld Lang Syne."

These instructions I carried out scrupulously.

Among the other items, the first act of "Money," a favourite choice for benefits as it provides parts for so many popular actors, was included in the programme.

Ellen Terry and I were asked to play the two young women and the question which we would each select was left for us to decide. "Which part do you choose, Madge?" she said. "They're both bad ones, especially in the first act."

At that time I was suffering from a sad family grief and I mentioned this to her adding, "Clara Douglas has only two lines and is rather melancholy so I think she will suit my present condition best." She therefore agreed to play Georgina Vesey while Mrs. Bancroft acted Lady Franklin.

On this occasion Lady Franklin, Georgina and Clara

Douglas all made their entrance together. This was arranged by Mrs. Bancroft who acted Lady Franklin magnificently.

During his last illness, Mr. Compton sent for me. He told me that my list was the best of all the contributions he had received and asked who "Auld Lang Syne" was.

I told him I was forbidden to say.

"I have often thought I knew who it must be," he said. "Was it —?" And he whispered her name. All I could do was to nod my head.

"I thought so," he said.

Many years later Mr., then Sir, Squire Bancroft, produced "Money," at a *matinée* performance in aid of the King's pension fund.

On this occasion, Sir Herbert Tree played Graves and giving rein to his occasionally uproarious spirit of fun determined to play pranks at rehearsal on Sir Squire who had long since retired from the stage and had no intention of being taught his business by the younger actors who were cast for the various parts.

One of the great effects in Graves's scene with Lady Franklin is obtained by his taking out a black-bordered handkerchief in order to dry his eyes, for he is in deep mourning for the death of his first wife, at the mention of whose name he always wept.

At the first rehearsal when Sir Squire wanted to show Sir Herbert the elaborate business, the latter felt in his pockets and said, "Dear, dear, I haven't got a handkerchief. I'll come with one to-morrow."

At the rehearsal the next day the handkerchief he produced had a black border so wide that it was much larger than the little square of white in the middle.

"The border is much too wide," said Sir Squire, very seriously.

"I'm sorry," said Sir Herbert Tree. "I'll bring another one to-morrow."

At the rehearsal the next day, when the time came for

him to take the handkerchief out of his pocket, he produced—a union jack !

Sir Squire had the most awful time of his life with some of the young actors, for your modern actor invariably makes a point of refusing to do what he is told by the old ones, especially in plays which have a tradition to maintain and “business” which is the result of the concentrated imagination of the original actors.

The modern actor “wants to think for himself,” as he calls it, with the result that he invariably substitutes what he calls “nature” for what he calls “art” and produces an effect which the old actor rejects as incompetent ineffectiveness.

If Sir Squire had told that cast that the actor who played Evelyn stood on his head, or that Clara Douglas on her first entrance undressed herself, I verily think they would have believed him. Unfortunately the women in our time were compelled to keep their clothes on, while in so many of the plays to-day they are compelled to take them off.

Different times, different manners ;—everything different.

CHAPTER II

BRISTOL

BEFORE I was seven my parents took me to Bristol whose theatre was then under the management of Mr. James Henry Chute.

He had been an actor on the Lincolnshire circuit and my mother wrote to him, "You were an actor once in our theatre ; now, you have one of your own ; let me be an actress in yours."

Mr. Chute said, "Yes, most certainly," for he had a great admiration of my mother's ability. To my regret, I never saw her on the stage, but I heard Mr. Chute say on one occasion when he was asked to go to see Miss Lilian Adelaide Neilson play Julia at the Haymarket, "I go to see no Julia in 'The Hunchback,' at any time, anywhere. I have seen Mrs. Robertson in 'The Hunchback.' I don't know if Sheridan Knowles ever saw her, but I have !"

She was one of the sweetest women who ever breathed. How shall I begin to express what she was ; how describe her. She was such a rare combination.

She was a very delightful creature to look at and her charm lasted until her death. She had beautiful and wonderful hair which retained its loveliness all her life.

She played the harp excellently, yet she could teach Susan how to make soup,—and very good soup too.

She had a magical influence over all sorts of animals. I have seen her with three or four canary birds at one time perched on her head and shoulders. They never sought to move or to behave badly in any way.

When she picked one off and put it on my shoulder, I had to put up with the consequences !

Even to-day I can recall the effect of the touch of her hand. If I had done anything naughty, she only put her hand on me and said, "Darling child, you shock me; don't do that again." Whatever "that" was I could not do it while her hand *rested* on me. The moment she moved her hand, however, I did what I was told not to—often.

It was not only in its restraining force that the touch of my mother's hand was remarkable. It seemed to give her an added sense of perception. "I can invariably tell from my touch," she often said to me, "whether a person is trustworthy."

Following out this idea, whenever she was going to engage a new maid, she always devised some pretext for laying her hand on the woman's arm,—by stopping her, for instance, as she was on the point of leaving.

If the woman shrank ever so slightly at the unexpected touch, my mother never troubled to take up her character for she declared such a woman could not be satisfactory.

Tribute to the beauty of her hands and the magnetism of her touch was once paid by no less a man than Charles Dickens. One day when he called he said, "Eyes may grow dim, hair may grow white, cheeks and lips lose their colour, but the sympathetic touch of a beautiful hand never dies."

Very often my mother used to speak German to me, and the first word I ever spoke, she told me, was in German. My father was looking for the *mustard* pot at dinner and I shouted for it at the top of my baby voice—"Zenf!"

My father entreated me to say it correctly, but I never did.

As I grew up to be a woman, I think my mother must have noticed that certain callers came to tea too frequently. One day she said to me, "Darling, remember that when anybody,—young, middle aged, or old,—says anything to you and you don't quite understand it or his expression

while he is saying it, always reply, 'Mother will know. I'll ask her.' Emphasise 'mother'; that will be sufficient."

That was her method of telling me how to take care of myself. How often, deep down in my heart, I have been able to say, "God bless mother," for in my passing through life, meeting all sorts and conditions of men, I have often said to myself, "Mother would know."

At the Bristol Theatre I made my debut as Eva in "Uncle Tom's Cabin," a dramatisation of Mrs. Henry Ward Beecher's famous novel which drove a large nail into the coffin of negro slavery in the United States.

Few books have made so profound an impression on the minds of the people as this, and dramatisations of it, I believe, still hold the stage in certain parts of America.

It would be as impossible to say how many times it has been performed as to guess the amount of money, in the aggregate, which it has drawn into the theatres of the world.

As Eva, I sang three or four little songs or hymns—one of which I remember began, "I see a land of spirits bright." I have always understood Mr. Chute paid my father a large salary for my services then.

As Eva I used to be carried up to Heaven with Uncle Tom at the end of the play. I was fastened round the waist to an ascending machine and we went up in a sort of apotheosis, like that in the opera of Faust.

My singing voice as a child was regarded as being somewhat exceptional and in the city a great friend of Mrs. Chute's was a Miss Pillinger who kept a musical academy. To this academy I was sent to acquire the rudiments of my musical education.

I owe this dear lady much. She was so good and she taught me so thoroughly. All my life I have felt the deepest gratitude for what she did for me.

She told my father she thought that I had a fine voice, so he took me to London so that Sir Jules Benedict, Mr. Alberto Randegger and Mr. Henry Russell, the composer



MY FATHER

of "Cheer, boys, cheer," might hear me sing. They were unanimous in saying they thought I could be a singer.

My father was so elated that, in his imagination, he "saw us all," as he said, "singing 'I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls.'"

On the journey back to Bristol, however, I got a sore throat which developed into diphtheria, a disease which was not much understood in those days.

That led to my tonsils being removed and with them went my high notes which had been of great service to me when I was in the choir of the Bristol Roman Catholic Church where I used to sing the high notes in the *Stabat Mater*.

That church's chief priest was Dr. English, afterwards Archbishop of Trinidad. It was his earnest desire that I should become a Roman Catholic and he spoke to my father about it. My father said, "No. When she herself realises what real religion means, she can follow her own inclinations."

All during these years of my youth, my father devoted a good deal of time to instructing me in the art of acting. He was a remarkable man; in fact he seemed to be not one man but twenty men, so varied and versatile was he.

In teaching me the value of contrast he often used the parts of Viola in "Twelfth Night," and Queen Constance in "King John." It would be difficult for me to say how often I had to repeat to him Viola's tenderly pathetic speech in which she says :

She never told her love
But let concealment, like a worm i' the bud,
Feed on her damask cheek.

and then Constance's vehement, "Gone to be married, gone to swear a peace," which he sometimes made me alternate with the scene in which Philip the Bastard speaks, "And hang a calfskin on those recreant limbs."

In going to and from the theatre, we used to have to cross the Suspension Bridge over the river and as the language of the sailors was highly coloured, if the drawbridge was up when we came to them and my father's quick ears

heard them speaking in the vernacular, he used to say to me, "Count twenty, Taticorum." This I had to do very loud so that I should not hear the men swearing.

In spite of his solicitude with regard to the sailors, if I did not come up to his expectations as Viola or Constance, he would use language so nautical that once I naïvely asked, "Daddy, were you ever a sailor?"

Even then I was fond of babies. One day, when we were out walking, I saw a rather besmirched little tot fall in the street. Immediately I let go of my father's hand and ran to pick it up. When I returned to him he said, "Quite right, my dear, to go and pick up a child that has fallen,—but always see that you pick up a *clean* one!"

When we returned home he took his copy of Burns's poems off the book shelf and read to me the one written "On a Louse."

On one occasion when we were walking down a country lane I picked a foxglove and gave it to him saying, "Isn't that pretty!"

"Lovely," he said. "When we get home I shall read you Shelley's poem 'On a Foxglove.'"

Yet how often poetry can wound and make one suffer!

Years later, when my Margaret's so-called marriage had taken place I wrote to her:

Nothing in the world is single
All things by a law divine
In one another's being mingle,
Why not I with thine.

In reply she wrote back, "Mother, don't quote Shelley again to me. Even he did not understand *everything*."

As I recall, my father had three maxims which he inculcated into me from the days of my earliest youth. They were:

Godly you should be.
Cleanly you must be.
Cheerful you shall be.

Beside Bristol, Mr. Chute also had the Bath Theatre. These two constituted the most wonderful training school, for some of the young actors engaged there became the most distinguished players of their time.

Place aux Dames,—I may mention Marie Wilton (Lady Bancroft), Miss Henrietta Hodson, Miss Kate Terry, afterwards Mrs. Arthur Lewis, Ellen Terry, Charles Coghlan, David James, the brothers William and George Rignold, Arthur Stirling, who married Miss Cleveland, and F. J. Cathcart who, later, acted with the Keans.

Among the stars who visited the theatre were Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean, Mr. Charles Mathews, Madame Celeste, the great Samuel Phelps, Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Wigan and Mr. Creswick.

In addition to the tragedies and comedies in which the stars appeared, the members of the company also played melodrama, farce and burlesque.

At the Christmas-tide of 1862 and 1863, I appeared in the pantomime in which a prominent part was acted by Miss Henrietta Hodson who had a beautiful singing voice. Later in life she married Mr. Henry Labouchere, the famous politician who represented Northampton with Mr. Charles Bradlaugh.

Mr. Labouchere, who was always "Labby" to his friends, was the quintessence of humour. He lived for the amusement of others and sent them into convulsions of laughter if they were sympathetic. I always went into convulsions, for he amused me.

One day, in the course of conversation he remarked, "I edit *Truth*."

"What a name to give a paper, Labby," I exclaimed.

"I am truth," he said.

"Some of the people who read your paper would say you are not," was my retort.

Shortly after he was married, he said to me, "Do you see any difference in Henrietta?"

I shook my head. "No."

"Oh, but there is a great difference. I spent half a crown on her the other day when we went to the registry office to be married."

It is becoming increasingly fashionable for young people to get married in a registry office. That purely secular service in which the holiest relation between man and woman is unblessed by the church was first used by a man who meant to do good. It often happened in those early days that a woman, walking in the street with a man, looked up and seeing the registrar's office said, "It will cost you half a crown to make me an honest woman. Will you do it?"

Many men did.

The registrar's office was, however, not designed for people to be married in.

I cannot imagine anything worse than for a girl to defraud herself of her trousseau and the demonstration of affection of her parents and friends around her, for nothing can make a woman right who has gone wrong. "For the ill doing of one woman, ten thousand women suffer." So Goethe, the great poet wrote, and *it is true*.

How often I have implored women never to divorce the father of their children! It handicaps them and throws over them a shadow seldom lifted.

In my early life, when I was about thirty and my children were young, I used always to picture how I would dress the bridesmaids when our girls married; who should be our friends and wonder if we should stand proudly by and see our daughters and sons married to good men and women while we prayed, with hearts full of joy, for their future happiness, and in imagination heard the choir sing "Oh, perfect love, all human thought transcending."

How young people can deprive themselves, as well as their parents, of all those dreams I never can understand. But they do, and they ask them to accompany them to the registry office with someone who is not even of the same religion.

On this question of a man and woman holding different

religious views marrying, I hold the strongest opinion. I have never seen it turn out satisfactorily ; their children are a strange mixture of both :—generous one moment, very mean in other moments : changing their minds ; often clever and often unscrupulous.

No, mixed marriages never succeed. I have known many of such marriages and, alas ! have myself suffered bitterly through them.

The Bath Theatre was burned down in 1862, but it was rebuilt and opened on March 3rd in the following year when Mr. Chute produced “ A Midsummer Night’s Dream.” Charles Coghlan was Demetrius ; Ellen Terry, Titania ; Kate Terry, Oberon, and I appeared as a singing fairy, with the songs “ Over hill, over dale ” and “ I know a bank ” as set by Mendelssohn.

Even to-day I remember Ellen Terry’s performance of Titania as a dream of charm. As girls we were “ Nellie ” and “ Madge ” to one another and “ Nellie ” and “ Madge ” we remained until her death.

I cannot recall that, at any period of our lives, we had any other feeling than that of affection for each other. I know I can say that for myself, despite certain insinuations to the contrary which appeared in some publications when we were young.

What would our country be without the press ? Yet it has pleased the Almighty to make some of its representatives the richest people in the world and with them, as with others, money is power,—but is it always power for good ?

In proof of what I have said about our regard for each other, let me quote one of the last letters I received from Nellie in the year—I cannot quote the exact date, for characteristically, she omitted to write it :

34, BURLEIGH MANSIONS,
ST. MARTIN’S LANE.

“ MADGE MY DEAR, on a bit of my best writing paper I am asking if you will do me a very great favour—will

you *make the appeal* at the forthcoming *Matinée* on the 27th of this month in aid of the Woman's League of Service for Motherhood—

If you will do this for me I cannot tell you how much it wd please me—I will let you have the particulars of the theatre and the time directly I hear from you—

Do say yes—to me—the audience always seems to say YES to YOU on these occasions—

When I ask anything I blunder so, and you always *persuade* them—

I don't know how you do it but you *do*.

I hope this heat suits you—it makes me crazy and long to be in the country where one can get along without servants and sich like fine folk—

You shd see my Edy cook—she's fine. No time for her here in old smoky, but at her cottage in Kent *she* shines !!

Yrs affectly, NELL."

When she played Titania, Nellie's parents used to allow her a small amount of pocket money every week. With it she always bought apples,—a real daughter of Eve,—and she always shared them with me.

Later in our life, when she had returned to the stage from her retirement and my husband and I were leaving the Court theatre to go to the Prince of Wales's, I persuaded Mr. Hare, who was our partner, to engage her to play Lilian Vavasour in "New Men and Old Acres," which I had originally played at the Haymarket.

Remembering her charm and beauty I assured Mr. Hare, "She'll play me off the stage." How well I remember using those very words.

Mr. Charles Kelly was engaged to play Brown, the leading man's part, and at the end of three months I was told he and Nellie were engaged to be married.

Kelly's father was a clergyman who lived outside Manchester and he married them. When I heard of their

marriage I wrote to her, "You have the world again at your feet."

Later still in our lives, we met again when we acted with Herbert Tree in "The Merry Wives of Windsor," at his "beautiful Theatre," as he always called His Majesty's whenever he spoke of it.

When he had determined to produce the play, he called on us one day when my husband and I were at Brighton and, to my astonishment, asked me to play either Mistress Page or Mistress Ford. Firmly but politely I declined. He refused to take "no" for an answer, so, at last, out of sheer bravado, never dreaming he would take me at my word, I said, "I'll play one Merry Wife, if you can get Ellen Terry to play the other."

Tree accepted the challenge. He rushed off to Winchelsea where Nellie had a cottage and arrived so early that she had not had her breakfast. Once there, he refused to budge until she had agreed to take part in the production.

In his letter to me telling me of the result of his visit, Tree said, "I told her it was your suggestion and she was delighted."

He went on to state, "Do you think I should give each of you a hundred pounds a week for six performances; any further performances to be paid for in full."

It is a matter of theatrical history that what, in a subsequent letter, Tree called "our combination" was a great success. Characteristically, he added in writing to me the day after the production, "The box office is speaking most eloquently of it, and the excitement in London is really extraordinary."

All the dressing-rooms at His Majesty's are upstairs in a building separated from the stage by a passage. To save Tree going up the stairs, he installed a lift which he placed at our disposal. The first time we used it, the machinery got out of order and he, Ellen and I were stuck between two floors for the best part of an hour.

I never used his "beautiful lift" again.

In my memory is an incident which happened one night, for it furnishes a text on which one might hang a discourse on the art of acting,—at least as I understand it.

In the scene in which Falstaff is disguised as a woman, Tree invented a piece of business in which, by pulling a string, a quantity of vegetables,—turnips, carrots, etc.,—fell from the woman's bag. Ellen used to pick up some of them and pelt Falstaff. It was a kind of pantomime rally and brought the curtain down with shouts of laughter and boisterous applause which called us before the curtain over and over.

As to whether it was Shakespeare or not, it will not do to enquire too closely.

One night, however, through some mischance, the cord did not act, the vegetables did not fall, there was no pantomime rally, and, in consequence, very little applause.

Tree was furious.

The next night when we met at the side of the stage so that he, Ellen, and I should make our first appearance together, as we always did, he sent for the property man and upbraided him "in good set terms," as Jaques says, or perhaps I should rather quote Hamlet and say, "In choice Italian." He had not finished his diatribe when our cue came, and with a parting injunction to the property man that he would finish what he had to say at the end of the scene, we went on.

Tree played so badly that it would be nearer the mark to say that he did not play at all.

When the curtain fell, I said to him, "You deserve a good talking to."

"What for?" he asked in the blandest of bland tones.

"In the first place for the language you used before Ellen Terry and me to the property man. It was quite out of character. In the second place for your performance. An actor's first scene gives him the opportunity of laying the foundation of his part on which he has to build the structure of the subsequent acts. You were so busy think-

ing of what you were going to say to the unfortunate property man that you laid no foundation whatever."

Tree opened his eyes in amazement. "How I wish I had met you when I first went on the stage," was all he said in reply.

My consent to appear in "The Merry Wives" was due to a desire to make up to him for having refused to play the leading part in a famous play with him at the Haymarket years before.

He came to our house to offer me the part.

When he told us the name of the author, my husband said, "My dear Tree, on no consideration will I allow my name or my wife to be associated in any way with a play by that particular author."

"It'll be a great success," urged Tree, "and you'll make a lot of money."

"My answer would still be the same," my husband replied, "if you offered us a thousand pounds a week."

Tree was amazed that we stood out against the allure of the financial proposition he made, but all through our lives we were guided by certain principles from which we did not depart. One of these principles was to speak the truth as we saw it. During my professional career, I literally breathed enemies because I was truthful. I do still.

Much good-natured fun has been poked at Herbert Tree for his constant reference to his "beautiful theatre." The adjective was familiar in his mouth. One night after he had had an excellent supper he hailed a taxi and said to the driver, "Drive me home."

"Certainly, sir. Where is your home?"

"I shall not tell you," said Tree, "but drive me to my beautiful home?"

How he got there I don't know.

Opposite the stage door of His Majesty's is a post office. One day Mr. Beerbohm Tree entered it and asked for a penny stamp. The assistant handed one across the counter ;

he looked at it for a moment, shook his head and said, "I don't like it. Can I have one out of a new sheet?"

"Certainly, Mr. Tree," said the obliging assistant, taking out a full sheet. He looked at the stamps critically, put his finger on one in the middle of the page and said, "I should like that one."

Gravely the assistant removed it and handed it to him.

I acted with him only during the six or eight weeks we played "The Merry Wives." At the end of the second week Ellen Terry and I went to him. "It is only in the first and last acts that the children have anything to do. The consequence is they get tired of waiting about, some of them go to sleep and wake up cross. We should like you to supply them with buns and milk during the evening, and engage a lady to play games with them."

"A splendid idea," he said, and the next night he sent in enough buns and milk for a regiment. I expostulated at the waste and told him the quantity of milk and the number of buns he should provide. He did this and Miss Terry sent in a lot of small dolls and toys for the children to play with.

Shortly before the war, he was at supper at the Beef Steak Club when the conversation turned on the old Act of Parliament which condemned actors to be regarded as "rogues and vagabonds." "I don't like rogues and vagabonds, although I know I am one of them," he said, "but when I look at Kendal, I know acting is the profession of a gentleman."

When Sir Herbert returned from his last visit to America, he met with an accident and went to Sir Alfred Fripp's nursing home in Cavendish Square in order to be operated on. My husband at the time was suffering acutely from bronchial asthma and, one day, just before we started for Brighton, whither we were going on his account, he said to me, "You might take some flowers to Tree and tell him I am too ill to come myself; but I hope he will soon be quite well again."

Very gladly I fell in with my husband's request. As I

was leaving, Tree said, "Give my love to Kendal." Those were the last words I ever heard him speak.

* * *

While we were at Bristol and I was about thirteen and a half, my father and most of the company determined to fill up a vacation by going on tour on the commonwealth plan, and he, having been elected manager, asked me, "Would you like, during your holidays, to belong to the commonwealth?"

I knew nothing of what a commonwealth was. The word, however, struck me as being so lovely with its suggestion of *wealth common* to everybody that I immediately replied with much enthusiasm, "Yes, daddy, under any circumstances."

My father then explained that I should have to make myself generally useful, that I should have to play whatever parts I was given, that sometimes I would have to be prompter and sometimes play in the orchestra.

The only two towns I recall visiting on that tour were Truro and Redruth. What appealed to me particularly about Truro was the stream which ran through the streets. In it the inhabitants washed their saucepans and their garments. It seemed to me that they were always at it. A cleanly people.

This was the way I carried out my duties. As a member of the orchestra which consisted of two violins played by the brothers William and George Rignold, I presided at the piano. And what a piano it was! Mr. William Rignold was a very good violinist and always played the "Carnival de Venice," and the overture to "Zampa." Whenever, even *now*, I hear the first strains of those overtures in any theatre, I return to those distant days of my orchestral experience.

Mr. Rignold also played variations on the "Carnival de Venice" which I vamped on the piano. As soon as the overture was over, I ran under the stage and arrived at

the prompter's entrance ; there I rang a bell to warn myself to draw up the curtain, and having pulled it up, secured it by looping the rope several times over the wooden pin which prevented it loosening.

So convinced was I that a bell was necessary to warn the men to be ready with the curtain that, although there were no men, I never omitted to ring it before taking up or lowering the curtain, no matter what the situation on the stage.

As the leading man of the company, Mr. William Rignold said he thought "The Lady of Lyons" would be a great attraction. It certainly needed a great attraction to draw people into the Theatre Royal, Truro.

When the play came to be cast, there was no one to play the Widow Melnotte, the mother of the hero. "Very well," said my father, "The General must go on for it"—the nickname I acquired as a child having become the common property of the company.

Shall I describe to you, my dear readers, my appearance at this time. I was rather a tall gawk, with a quantity of hair and a nose which was fat at the end.

This poor nose of mine I have always regretted having, for in my time as an actress the press of England only admired the *nez retroussée* which seems to fly straight into the heart of the opposite sex. A good figure, plenty of hair, sound teeth, all go by the board when weighed against the charm of the *nez retroussée*. How often have I sat beside the happy possessor of that feature and prayed in my heart for one ! No good. No use. My prayers have always been unavailing ; but, thank God ! that *nez retroussée* has never gone with brains, so great is the justice of the Almighty.

Rachel, Ristori, Sarah Bernhardt, all had prominent noses. Even now when I go to the theatre, I always find that the *nez retroussée* is still powerful with the dramatic critics.

To return to my appearance. I was generally dressed

in brown or dark blue serge, for reasons of economy, and I wore a sailor hat at the back of my head which fashion made *de rigueur*.

In "The Lady of Lyons" the Widow Melnotte is discovered sitting at a table, while her son is painting. I was given a dress of my mother's, padded to make it fit me, with a *fichu* and cap of some white material. William Rignold told me in the morning that his brother George would make me up for the part.

He did.

When I rose to look at my son and crossed the stage to touch his arm in sympathy with his unrequited love, Mr. Rignold got his first glimpse of me and whispered, "Go up stage."

The reason was his brother George had made me look a hundred ! and given me wrinkles which, even *now*, in my old age, I do not possess. I was so frightened by William's intensity that, noting there was a window with a blue and white check curtain,—there always is a blue and white check curtain in the Melnottes' cottage—I went up and looked out of it.

In this scene Claude's friend, Gaspard, enters to tell him how, when he went to deliver the former's letter to the proud Pauline, he had been unceremoniously kicked out of the house and in his indignation at the ignominy exclaims, "Blows to a French citizen, blows."

The actor who was playing the part had seen me dressed and made up and had declared to one of the others, "She'll ruin the play."

When he spoke the line I have quoted he added, "I could show you the marks, if your *mother* was not in the room."

That gag, I am sorry to say, had been made use of by many actors who afterwards played the part.

When to my relief the curtain fell, William Rignold crossed over to me and asked, "Who made you up?"

"Your brother," I replied.

“ Well, go and wash your face before you attempt to play the next act.”

Hurt to the quick and with the tears coursing down my cheeks, I went to my place in the prompt entrance and at the end of the next act rang the bell, lowered the curtain, then went to my dressing-room and washed !

I was glad the Widow Melnotte did not appear in the second act, as it gave me the opportunity to get composed. In the third act, however, the unfortunate lady is discovered putting on the cottage table a loaf of bread and some butter, preparing for the return of her son who, masquerading as a prince, at the behest of the villain, Beauseant, has married the proud “ lady of Lyons.” Remembering Mr. Rignold’s injunction to wash my face, I had not put any make-up on, and had, therefore, regained my youth, a thing which, during my long life, I have constantly noticed widows have endeavoured to do.

When the curtain went up and I raised my head, the Truro public greeted me with roars of laughter.

Directly William Rignold entered he again said, “ Go up stage,” and up stage I went and remained there.

In the next act the widow comes into a prominent position over the question of a divorce for her son from his newly made bride and she throws herself into his arms declaring, “ No divorce can separate a mother from her son.” As I threw myself into Mr. Rignold’s arms, he threw me roughly away and exclaimed under his breath, “ You will never play this part again.” I never did.

Time went on and Mr. John Hollingshead, for many years the manager of the Gaiety Theatre, saw my husband and me in the play. He offered us an engagement and took the Vaudeville Theatre for six weeks—the longest consecutive run “ The Lady of Lyons ” had then had.

Miss Louise Moodie played the Widow Melnotte. She showed me how the part ought to be played. Even now, I can hear the music of her sweet voice, and I recall the beauty of her hands with which, in Pauline’s grief, she

stroked my hair. I used to look forward with the greatest delight to acting the scene with her, for she is my ideal Widow Melnotte and I have never seen anyone to compare with her performance of the part.

The Colonel Damas was Mr. John Ryder, a very distinguished,—almost a great actor,—with a splendid physique and a magnificent voice. He gave a remarkable performance.

When the curtain fell on the parting scene between Claude and Pauline, I always refused to take a call, no matter how prolonged the applause, as I knew it destroyed every illusion for the public to see Pauline bobbing up and smiling after she has fainted on the stage.

One night Mr. Ryder paid me the compliment of saying, "You are more than right, young lady, in doing what your feelings tell you. Your applause is here, in the eyes of the actors around you."

Mr. Ryder had, in his young days, played the leading parts to Macready and Charles Kean.

There used to be a humorous habit among the actors of condemning a poor player by saying, "He's good to his mother."

Mr. Ryder was good to his mother to whom he was devotedly attached, but, as I have said, he was also a very fine actor, so that the axiom did not apply to him.

His youth, like the youth of so many other players, was a desperate struggle for existence, and for a long time he never had more than two pounds a week. His performances were almost always adversely criticised by the press, so that he had no reason to love it.

On one occasion, about the time he played Colonel Damas with us, or shortly after, a luncheon was organised in his honour. I don't recall who was in the chair or who proposed his health, but I do remember the vivid onslaught he made on the press and that in his blunt manner he told them, without any circumlocution, that if, at the beginning of his career, they had meted out to him one-hundredth

part of the praise they were now lavishing on him it would have made all the difference in the world to his life.

I have a certain amount of sympathy for Mr. Ryder's bitterness, for I doubt if any other actress of my own time ever had more adverse criticism poured on her than I did.

During the run of "The Lady of Lyons," at the Vaudeville, Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, the first Lord Lytton, the author of the play, accompanied by his son, the poet "Owen Meredith," came to see us.

At the end of the parting scene he was brought round from his box to the stage and I was sent for. I was very frightened as to the impression my performance had made on him. He, however, soon reassured me, as he expressed his astonishment at the fact that I shed real tears when Pauline parted from Claude, but I cannot tell even you, my patient public, the words he said to me.

I do, however, remember that I returned home *bareheaded*, my head being so swollen with the fact that the author had himself told me I was something like what *he* imagined Pauline should be ! I wish I had written down his words as soon as I got home.

Even if I had had any desire to do that, what my beloved husband said to me would have prevented me doing so. "Madge," he said, "recollect that he is a very old gentleman. I don't think he heard all the play ; he may even have slept during most of it."

Let me say here, in parenthesis, that neither my parents nor my husband ever did or said anything that pandered to my vanity.

Our stage management of the end of the parting scene, as we arranged it, struck a new note. From the moment Pauline tore herself from her father's arms and went to Claude, I never left his side until he took my arms from him in order to join Damas' troop, while the notes of the "Marseillaise" were played softly in the distance, as if the company was on the march.

All through my career, I noticed that any original

business I invented and introduced into a play was always copied by others.

When, many years later, Irving produced the play at the Lyceum with himself as Claude and Ellen Terry as Pauline, he carried this idea of mine much farther, for he showed Colonel Damas's troops marching down the street, outside the window of the cottage.

By the expedient of causing the men, as they passed the back cloth representing the house on the other side of the street, to return and thus pass the window again and again, he kept up the illusion of a large body of men marching by, until at length, having worked up the effect to a crescendo of excitement, and to the deafening applause of the audience, he appeared at the end of the procession.

It was "The Lady of Lyons" which made the fortunes of Miss Helen Faucit and Macready, and it helped us, for during the run of the play my husband told me that the first thousand pounds we had been able to save was in the bank.

I loved speaking the words of Pauline, for they are charged with romance and beauty, and the last act certainly enabled me to make a great appeal to the emotions of the audience. I used to think that I gave my best performance in this part which was my favourite, although I have never before confessed that I had a favourite part.

In these days of so-called civilisation and dramatic progress people tell me that the play is mere "sob-stuff." I refuse to believe it. I am also told that this play and Richelieu are "theatrical fustian." I refuse to believe that, too. They are nothing of the kind. They offer enormous opportunities to actors who can play them. Their temperament and feeling must be in accord with the part, for these plays, like Shakespeare's, make onerous demands on all the powers which go to the making of actors, and little, if any, of the need for these powers is found in the plays which are produced to-day, 1933.

How I used to make my parents laugh after they had

retired from the stage by asking them if they would like me to act the scenes of the Widow Melnotte with all the asides spoken to me on that miserable evening.

"Do, General, do!" my father used to say, laughing in anticipation of my imitations of William Rignold, while my mother pathetically cried, "Don't, General, don't."

On another evening this audacious company attempted "Macbeth." My duties were strange and numerous. After tinkling the bell and drawing up the curtain, I went on the stage as one of the witches; then, removing my rags and wig, I spoke Donalbain's lines in the next scene and became a guest at the banquet of the Macbeths until I heard Lady Macbeth say, "Feed and regard him not," when I had to leave suddenly to prepare to become a witch again. In the dark during the cauldron scene I left the stage to appear as the child who speaks the lines beginning, "Be bloody, bold and resolute," after which I made another quick change to become the ghost of one of the eight kings who appear to Macbeth.

Finally, in the battle scene my duty was to clash two rapiers to help suggest the conflict between the two armies.

When the curtain fell I considered I had every right to claim my share of the takings of the commonwealth, although I never heard what the amount was.

Of my Bristol days I recall another rather ludicrous incident. This was when Mr. James Bennett, a well-graced actor of the time, whose name, like that of most actors, is now "writ in water," came to star in "Virginia," in which I was Virginia.

In one scene Virginia, who has been abducted by the order of Appius Claudius, is in the care of a coloured woman, and her father, searching for her and calling her name through the streets, rushes heartbroken into the market-place.

At the rehearsal, Mr. Bennett said to me, "I want you, when you hear me call your name for the first time, to raise your head; the second time you hear it, you break away

from the black woman, and on the third time, as I enter, you make a wild rush to me and kiss me, as I have seen you kiss your father. Can you do it?"

"Of course I can do it," I replied.

When he came on, I rushed at him impetuously, flung my arms around his neck and kissed him fervently.

Alas! he wore a toupee which was held to his head by springs. I had never seen a toupée before. Somehow, my hands caught the springs and up it flew into the air!

A less accomplished artist would have been disconcerted by the accident, but Mr. Bennett was very adroit. In a moment he threw his toga over his head and kept it covered until the end of the scene. He was not even angry with me, but said, "Such impulsive sincerity comes only from nature; but, remember, with impulsive sincerity you can be made to suffer very acutely."

How I have realised the truth of those words.

During all this time at Bristol, I was at Miss Marshall's Academy, where I remained until I was about fifteen.

How it happened I do not know, for, naturally, as I was a minor, my father did all the business connected with my acting, but Mr. Wild, who was a partner of Mr. Buckstone and ran the Theatre Royal, Bradford, came to the Academy and heard me sing. The result was he engaged me for the burlesque boy's part in "Rasselas."

When I went to the theatre I met the scenic artist, Mr. John O'Connor, who in later years enjoyed a high reputation in his profession in London. In addition to his scene painting, he used to paint pictures which I admired very much. One day I said to him, "Mr. O'Connor, when I'm rich I shall buy a picture from you."

I never forget a promise and the first five pounds I ever spent on a picture was to buy a little still-life one by him.

Unlike the custom of to-day when the curtain rises at half-past eight and goes down finally at eleven or before, "the two hours' traffic of the stage," as the chorus of Romeo and Juliet says, was invariably twice as long then. I

generally had to play a part in the first piece, and the burlesque boy's part in which I had to sing in the second, so that no one knew whether my future was to be on the dramatic or musical stage.

Meantime, my salary was raised to ten pounds a week and I was able to put into execution a resolution I had formed one night in Bristol when I heard an actor who had been playing a scene with my father say, on making his exit, "Robertson has forgotten his lines again."

There and then I determined that, at the first possible opportunity, my father and mother should never work again,—and they never did.

CHAPTER III

MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS

MY brother, Thomas William Robertson,—Tom as we called him and T. W. Robertson on the play-bills of his time,—was our parents' eldest child.

As he grew up, he became the favourite of our great-aunt, Mrs. Tom Robertson, who, when he was a small boy, used to dress him picturesquely in white ducks to his knees, with white shoes and socks, a soft white shirt and a mauve velvet coat.

One day, when the company was playing in Newark, Yorkshire, Tom, who even as a child was of an exquisitely chivalrous and quixotic nature, went, alone, for a walk. On his way he was overtaken by a sturdy young beggar boy, much bigger than himself, who demanded a penny.

Undaunted by the other's superior size and truculent manner my brother faced him resolutely and replied, "I haven't got a penny."

"Very well, then, give me your coat."

"That's different," said Tom. "*I can* give you that."

Without a moment's demur he took off his new velvet coat and handed it over to the boy, who went off with it.

When, coatless, he returned home, my great-aunt wanted to know what he had done with it.

Without a moment's hesitation he replied, "A beggar boy asked me for a penny, and as I did not have it, *for you never give me any money*, he asked for my coat and I gave it to him."

My aunt was amazed. She took her purse from her pocket, took out a shilling and handed it to Tom. "That

beggar boy can't have gone out of the village," she said. "Go and find him. Give him the shilling and get back your coat."

Tom went out, found the boy, gave him the shilling, retrieved his coat and returned with it in triumph.

Later, as a member of an actor's family, he went on the stage and was given small parts, but I always understood he couldn't "act for nuts," to use the modern phrase, so he determined to go to France and Germany to learn to speak and write the languages thoroughly, with a view to becoming a schoolmaster. I believe my great-aunt found some of the money for his expenses.

Although my brother was so poor an actor, his knowledge of stage technique was remarkable and he could and did teach the actors how to play the parts in his plays to perfection.

Tribute to his skill in this respect has been publicly paid by Bancroft in the book he wrote with the then Mrs. Bancroft apropos the production of his first play "Society" at the Prince of Wales's Theatre :

I would like to note how much of the success I was fortunate enough to achieve was due to the encouragement and support of the author who spared no pains with me, as with others, to have his somewhat novel type of characters acted as he wished.

Gilbert, who was a splendid producer of his own plays, learned a great deal from him and Sir Arthur Pinero, an equally great producer, unquestionably followed in my brother's footsteps as a dramatist and pioneer of the *natural* school of writing and acting, quite a different thing from the *naturalistic* school.

His admiration of my brother is to be found in the fact that he made him the hero of "Trelawney of the Wells."

My brother never lost any of his quixotic qualities.

One day Tom, who had then established his position as a dramatist, for it was after "Caste" had been produced, took me to an afternoon party given by Mr. and Mrs.

Edward Lawson,—he was later raised to the peerage as the first Lord Burnham,—in Mecklenburgh Square. I remember on that occasion I had on a little blue serge frock and a coat, with a sailor hat. I must have looked out of place among all the beautifully dressed women, among whom was Miss Rosie Feist who later became my sister-in-law, for she married Tom. She was a niece of Mr. Jonas Levy, the proprietor of the *Daily Telegraph*, who was one of the guests, as was his brother, Mr. Lionel Lawson. I suppose it must have been through Tom that I was asked to sing. I did so, accompanying myself on the piano in a song which began, “The beating of my own heart was all the sound I heard.”

It was perfectly true. My heart thumped like a hammer, I was so nervous.

A few days later, Tom took me out in a hansom cab, a great adventure for a young girl in those days. In front of a cook shop he saw a little crowd of seven or eight children, intent on the steaming food which was being cooked in the window. He stopped the cab and said to me, “Get out, Marge; we’re going to enjoy ourselves.”

With a, “Follow me, children,” he marched into the shop. He asked each child in turn what he would like to eat and ordered a large portion of whatever the child said. Then he made enquiries into their family and sent each one away with something hot and something cold, wrapped in a piece of newspaper.

As we got into the hansom after he had paid the bill, he said to me, “Isn’t it splendid! None of them will be hungry again to-day. So much for ‘Caste.’”

“Caste” has generally been considered the best of my brother’s plays. Like all his other work, it offers splendid opportunities for the actors who take part in it, for which reason it made a strong impression both in England and America.

Indeed, “Caste” gave its name to a company,—“The Caste Company,”—which travelled through England for

many years and served as a means of advertising the talents of a large number of actors who, later, made their mark on the London stage. Among them were George Alexander and Herbert Waring, both of whom were afterwards members of our company at the St. James's Theatre.

The first of my brother's plays to be produced was "Society." He offered it without success in several quarters. Among them was the Haymarket, which was then under the management of Mr. Buckstone.

Mr. Buckstone read it and wrote, "It must fail wherever it is produced." He then gave it to Mr. Chippendale to read, and Mr. Chippendale turned it down contemptuously with the one word, "Rubbish," written on the title page, as anyone may see who looks at the manuscript in the library at Stratford-on-Avon.

At that time, among the popular dramatists, Henry J. Byron occupied a conspicuous place. He was an exceedingly facile writer of comedy, farce and burlesque, and his "Our Boys," which made history and a fortune for Messrs. David James and Thomas Thorne, the then managers of the Vaudeville Theatre, had the distinction of running for over four years without a break.

Byron, who was connected with the family of the poet, was a great friend of Tom's, so that I knew him from my girlhood and once I boxed his ears. I knew him well enough for that.

On one occasion he and Tom quarrelled bitterly, and did not speak for some time. One day, however, quite unexpectedly they did meet and Harry, as I, like all his friends, called Byron, went up to my brother and holding out his hand said, "It's a long time since we met, Tom."

My brother grasped the proffered hand and the hatchet was buried for all time.

After a while, Harry said, "What's that bulging out of your pocket?"

"It's a manuscript of a play I've been putting together," said Tom.

Harry pulled it out and said, "I'm going to take it home and read it."

He did.

He was so impressed with it that he gave it to Miss Marie Wilton, later Lady Bancroft, the manager of the little old Prince of Wales's theatre, now the Scala, in Tottenham Street.

Before she took it, the name of the theatre had been the Queen's.

It was changed to the Prince of Wales's by special permission of His Royal Highness (King Edward), while later the name of the Queen's was given to a theatre in Long Acre under the management of Henrietta Hodson, where the company included Irving, Toole, John Clayton, Lionel Brough and Ellen Terry when the salary of each of them was probably well under ten pounds a week.

In so ramshackle a condition was the old Queen's when Marie Wilton took it, that it had earned for itself the unenviable nickname of "The Dust Hole." Under the Bancrofts' able and brilliant management which made their fortune, the word "gold" was prefixed to the soubriquet, so that it became "The Gold-Dust Hole."

The Prince of Wales's was often spoken of as a "bandbox of a theatre," and the auditorium was charmingly decorated, while the scenery was as realistic as could be desired. The doors were not painted canvas but of real wood; the pictures were well painted and in real frames instead of being painted on the canvas walls; the china and silver used on the stage were as good as anything to be found in the drawing-rooms of the people in the same class of life and the acting was as realistic as the writing of the play.

There was this difference, however, between the realistic acting of that day and this, viz. that every word spoken in the theatre could be heard in every part of the house.

The acting in those days travelled from the brain to the heart and from the heart to the brain. To-day, much of

it does not reach as high as the heart, but seems, rather, to be *below the belt*.

To return for a moment to Byron. During his last illness, by which time my husband and Mr. Hare, as Sir John then was, were partners at the St. James's Theatre, I went to see him, not realising the fact that his end was so near.

When I asked how he was, he replied, "I'm very ill, my dear ; in fact I'm dying." Then his face lighted up with a characteristic, whimsical smile. "It is amusing how kind people are to me, now that they know I shall never write any more plays ! They send me fruit, and flowers, and game, and birds—such a lot of birds. Yesterday somebody sent me a hare. It was a big hare, a magnificent hare. It was so big I thought Kendal must be inside."

In one respect Harry Byron differed from all the writers of my experience. They all needed quiet when they were working. He did not. Often he would be sitting at his desk and his children would be talking or playing and making a great deal of noise. If, then, their mother said, "Children, don't make such a noise, your father is writing," Byron would put down his pen, and get up from his desk. "I can't write any more," he would say. He loved noise.

The motto of the Byron family is, as most people know, "Crede Byron." Byron named his daughter Crede. She grew up to be a pretty girl and went on the stage, but left it on her marriage, and she died very soon after. Byron's son also went on the stage, but he did not make any mark as an actor.

Marie Wilton was so impressed with "Society," that she accepted it and produced it.

In it two actors both of whom in later life became so successful that they received the honour of knighthood, made their first appearance in London. They were John Hare and Squire Bancroft. At that time they were playing at the Theatre Royal, Birmingham, and my brother Tom got them both engaged to act in "Society."

When Tom planned this play, he confided to my father

that in the club scene,—the Owl's Nest,—he intended, when the play was produced, to have real hooks screwed into the walls of the room so that the actors could hang their real coats on them.

Our father, vivid as was his imagination, was by no means impressed. "I think, Tom," he said, "you'd better try something more romantic than hats and coats on pegs in which to interest the public."

The scene made an instant success by its realism.

Incredible as it may seem in these days, the terms my brother asked for "Society" were only one pound for each performance although it was a three-act play.

I have said he was quixotic. In nothing was this characteristic more strikingly demonstrated than in his attitude towards this play.

Years later, when the success of "Ours," "Caste," "M.P." and "School," had given him an established position among the leading dramatic writers of the day, Bancroft, who had by then married Marie Wilton, wrote to him that they proposed reviving "Society," and asked what terms he would charge.

Although he could have asked and would have been paid a percentage of the gross receipts, he replied that when "Society" was first produced he was very glad to let it be done for a pound a performance in order to get the opportunity of a production and he did not think it would be fair for him to charge any more.

And a pound a night was all he would take for the revival!

There was a time when my brother's work was called "The Tea Cup and Saucer drama," or alternatively, "The Bread and Butter School."

His teacups and saucers, however, were of the finest china, and his bread and butter, I have always maintained, was as good as could be obtained anywhere. The flour was very fine, the dough was carefully kneaded and the bread beautifully browned and hot from the oven.

The butter was fresh and savoured with just enough salt

to enhance its delicious flavour and it was served in delicate pats, decorated with the parsley of Love and Romance obtained from the same parsley bed in which babies are born ; or—as I believed then and do now—are brought from heaven.

Though a certain section of people interested in the drama may make light of the Robertson plays, it must not be forgotten that my brother did pioneer work in bringing a more realistic drama into being.

Whatever else may be said of his plays, one fact stamps their representation in London as unique.

During the life of the Bancrofts, they were given, in all, 2,900 performances in eighteen years. In other words, if they had been played continually they would have run for ten years.

The work of no other author in my experience or in my knowledge of the history of the English stage has ever approached that number.

Despite the calumniators, an estimate of the value set on my brother's work in his own time can be formed by the statement published in *The Times* in January 1869 on the first performance of "School" :

The fact is not to be denied that the production of a new comedy by T. W. Robertson at the Theatre which, once obscure, has become, under the direction of Miss Marie Wilton, the most fashionable in London, has now to be regarded as one of the most important dramatic events of the year.

"School" was played for 381 consecutive performances,—an extraordinary run in those days,—and might, Bancroft stated, "have been played for another year, but 'that way madness lies.'"

So enthusiastic a worker was my brother that part of the last act of "M.P." was dictated while he was lying on a sick bed.

So great was his anxiety as to its fate, that Bancroft sent a messenger after each act with the news of the way the audience received it.

Progress is the order of the world and the revolutionaries of to-day inevitably become the conservatives of to-morrow.

We of the Robertson family, however, know what my brother did for the drama of his day, and in the lifetime of my family we always spoke of him as a "Napoleon" of his time.

This feeling of his importance was inculcated in us at so early an age that it might almost without exaggeration be said to be innate. It cropped out even in our games.

When his wife died, he was left with a son and a daughter,—Tom and Maude,—who lived with my parents.

I always stood on my dignity and insisted on being called Aunt. This the girl refused to do.

Tom was, in those days, gifted with a vivid imagination and, perhaps, a sense of supreme power. One day I went into the nursery and found him spitting on the floor, with the animals of his Noah's Ark around him.

"That's a very dirty thing you are doing. Stop it at once."

"Oh, Aunt Madge," he exclaimed, "do let me spit. I'm trying to make the flood."

In the nursery we used to make up for ourselves all sorts of wonderful games. The principal one was a trial and my father was always invited to witness it. The three parts in the court were always cast in the same way. Tom was the prisoner, Maude the policeman and I was the judge.

The dialogue of the game used to go in something like this manner :

I : Prisoner at the Bar, what are you here for ?

Tom : Murder.

I : Dear me, dear me. Prisoner, have you anything to say ?

Tom (*very defiantly*) : Nothing.

Then the policeman told the story of the crime, as it had been concocted for the performance.

When it had finished, I addressed the prisoner in these

words : " I am afraid I must condemn you for this crime. Have you anything to say before I sentence you to death ? "

TOM (*drawing himself up to his full height*) : I am the son of the author of " Caste."

I (*triumphantly*) : Prisoner, you are free !

The changes we rang on this well-worn game always made my father laugh heartily. Occasionally, however, as he had been brought up as a solicitor, he would make stringent remarks on what he considered *acts of injustice* perpetrated in the real courts.

As I remember my brother, he was very accurately depicted in the sketch and etching by the late R. A. Macbeth, R.A., the originals of which I gave to the Peterborough Museum. Rather above middle height, with a full beard and moustache, sorrowful, melancholy eyes, brown in colour with a dash of yellow, and brown hair with a natural wave in it, he always made me think of Giotto's head of Christ, and that is really the way in which Macbeth depicted him. His melancholy eyes were, however, contradicted by the cheeriest laugh one ever heard and it rang through the room whenever a joke was made.

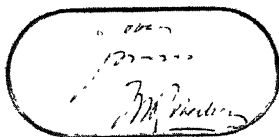
He had the loveliest hands, delicately shaped with tapering fingers. Anyone who saw them could have had no doubt about his being one of the most highly sensitive creatures that ever was born.

One morning when I was out walking I met him and after enquiring about my husband he asked, " How are the children ? "

" Don't talk about my children in that light and debonair manner," I replied. " You should ask how are my dukes and duchesses."

" Oh, you funny woman," he answered, laughing. " How are your disappointments ? They both begin with the same letter."

" If you think your experience is going to be mine, Tom, *nous verrons, milor, nous verrons !* "



T. W. ROBERTSON, THE DRAMATIST

The drawing by W. H. Kendal, after the etching by R. A. Macbeth, R.A.

When he was dying, his wife, his sister-in-law, and I—all expecting babies—stood by his bedside. His eyes travelled from one to the other of us and suddenly he said, “Ships in full sail, and I shall be far away when they come into port. God bless them all.”

His humanity was extraordinary.

Some years after his death, his grave was made the occasion or the excuse for a violent attack on me by two distinguished journalists, Mr. Clement Scott, then probably the most important dramatic critic in London, and Mr. George R. Sims, who signed his weekly article in the *Referee* “Dagonet.” They discovered that my brother’s grave had fallen into disrepair and published a violent denunciation of me for not having kept it in order.

It was in vain that I informed them that the care of my brother’s grave was not in my hands as it was in the possession of my sister-in-law, his late wife, who was then living with her second husband in Germany.

My brother’s memory is something I have always venerated.

“Hats off, gentlemen, when you speak of my brother,” I once wrote to Messrs. Scott and Sims after they had returned to the attack.

Sooner or later, it has been my experience, people who attack become the attacked, in turn. It reminds me of that Arabian proverb quoted by Colonel Damas in my favourite play, “The Lady of Lyons,” “Curses, like chickens, always come home to roost.”

A few years later, Mr. Clement Scott in the course of an interview with Mr. Raymond Blathwayte, then a noted interviewer, published in *Great Thoughts*, on January 1st, 1898, an article animadverting on the morals of the stage from which I quote the following extracts :

If anyone I loved [said Mr. Scott during the course of our recent conversation] insisted on going on the stage contrary to my advice I should be terrified for her future, and hopeless for the endurance of our affection or even friendship. For stage life, according to my

experience, has a tendency to deaden the finer feelings, to crush the inner nature of men and women, and to substitute artificiality and hollowness for sincerity and truth and, mind you, I speak from an intimate experience of the stage, extending over thirty-seven years. . . .

It is nearly impossible for a woman to remain pure who adopts the stage as a profession. Everything is against her. The freedom of life, of speech, of gesture, which is the rule behind the curtain, renders it almost impossible for a woman to preserve that simplicity of manner which is after all her greatest charm. . . .

But what is infinitely more to be deplored is that a woman who endeavours to keep her purity is almost of necessity foredoomed to failure in her career. It is an awful thing to say and it is still more terrible that it is true, but no one who knows the life of the green-room will dare deny it. . . .

All I can say is that I marvel at any mother who allows her daughter to take up the theatrical career, and still more am I astonished that any man should calmly endure that his wife should become an actress, unaccompanied by himself. He must be either a fool or a knave. Nor do I see how a woman is to escape contamination in one form or another. . . .

I know I shall have the old, old saying thrust down my throat that "to the pure all things are pure"; but surely now that phrase must have lost its power. No one is pure, no one is beyond temptation, and it is unwise in the last degree to expose a young girl to the inevitable consequences of a theatrical life !

The article was widely quoted all over the country and created a great sensation.

The indignation it occasioned in the theatrical world was enormous, and loud were the denunciations showered on Mr. Scott's head.

The fat was in the fire with a vengeance. One afternoon, a message came from my husband asking me to go down to his study. I arrived to find Messrs. Irving, Bancroft, Tree, Wyndham, Hare and one or two others with my husband whom they had come to consult, because they all appreciated the extraordinary clarity of his views and the value of his judgment. He was a real cricket umpire.

One of these gentlemen explained the object of their visit was to get our signatures to a letter which was lying on the table addressed to Mr. J. M. Levy, the father of Lord Burnham, and the then proprietor of the *Daily Tele-*

graph, demanding the dismissal of Mr. Clement Scott from the staff of that paper.

It had always been inculcated in me by my dear husband never to sign a paper without reading it so carefully that I knew it practically backwards as well as forwards and then,—*not* to sign it.

Following this practice, I read the letter carefully and turning to the gentlemen said, "I refuse to add my signature to this letter. Mr. Scott has earned his bread and butter on the *Telegraph* for a great number of years, and I am sure he must be sorry he ever gave that interview."

My husband, I then found, had already refused to add his name to the document. Our holding aloof did not, however, prevent the letter being sent. Not only that, it had its desired effect, for Mr. Scott was discharged from the *Telegraph*. Later, he started a weekly paper of his own but it failed, and he died soon after.

That, during his association with the *Daily Telegraph*, he had done notable work in advancing the cause of the drama, no one will deny, even though it might be said that his views were occasionally tinged by a sentimental partisanship.

* * *

The only other members of my family who, so far as I know, were connected with the stage, were my sisters Fanny and Georgina.

They had both married and retired before I was old enough to know about their theatrical ability, for besides being the youngest member of the family, a gap of years occurred after my parents' last child before I was born.

I have often thought that if my brother Tom had been able to have his way, when he was young, he would have gone into the army, for he was passionately fond of soldiering.

His thwarted ambition, if such it was, was achieved by my brother Harry, who, if he was not born a soldier, was born to be one. He was apprenticed to a lawyer, but, as soon as war broke out in the Crimea, he enlisted.

In those days it was possible for a man to be bought out of the army. My father and mother adopted this course, but it made no difference to Harry. He ran away for the second time, enlisted as a private in the 17th Lancers and fought in the Crimea under General Blinkhorn.

Before he left England, he wrote a short letter to my mother in which he said, "I adore you, but I will never return home except with a commission."

I cannot remember my brother at this time, for I was too young. I do recall, however, that, when the Crimea War was over, I was told that, if I held my father's hand on one side and some one else's on the other, I would be allowed to go to see the illuminations which consisted of a lighted candle set in each pane of glass.

Years later, when I was in my teens and had returned to the stage after my career as a child actress, Colonel Castle, an amateur actor who lived in Worcester, got up a performance of "Ours." I was engaged to play Mary Netley, the part originally acted by Miss Marie Wilton (Lady Bancroft), while Blanche Haye was played by Louise Moore, a sister of Nellie Moore, the heroine of a popular song at that time which began :

I have loved you Nellie Moore,
And my happiness is o'er.

Worcester being a garrison town and Colonel Castle being in command of the regiment, privates in the regiment acted as scene-shifters. The stalls and dress circle were reserved for the wives and guests of the officers and the upper part of the house was given over to the men of the regiment and their wives.

It will be recalled that the second act of the play takes place in the Crimea. As the curtain fell on it, a soldier in the gallery fainted.

Somehow, without knowing why, I was quite interested in the incident, and, next day, I asked Captain McAdam, who had taken part in the performance, who the man was.

Captain McAdam replied, "He's Corporal Ashton."

"Ashton?" I repeated. "Can I see him?"

"Certainly. He's a corporal in my company; I'll send for him."

When he arrived and I went into the room in which he had been shown, I asked, as I looked at him, "Is your name Ashton?"

"Yes, miss," he replied, saluting me.

"Your name is not Ashton," I replied, "it's Robertson. I'm your sister. You must go and see mother."

"Never," he answered, "till I'm a commissioned officer."

"What does that matter to her. Your first duty is to your mother."

Later, I took him home and I shall never forget the scene when my mother took him into her arms. His career resembled that of Claude Melnotte, for he left a private in the regiment in which, later on, he became a major.

On one occasion during the Crimea, his company had to ford a river. Each man carried a quantity of flour hung in bags on each side of his saddle. In crossing, some of these bags got wet, with the result that the men had only half rations.

When my brother's portion was given to him he went to General Blinkhorn and said, "Sir, will you honour me by sharing my rations?"

I have always thought it was through that act of generosity he was helped to his appointment as Sergeant-Major.

Later in life, he became riding master to the regiment and taught the Duke of Connaught to ride, when His Royal Highness was stationed in the Curragh.

During that period he also invented the Lancers Ride which has become so popular a feature of the military tournament.

CHAPTER IV
MY HUSBAND

MY husband's baptismal name was William Hunter Grimston. He was the son of Mr. Edward Grimston of Yorkshire. He was named William after his godfather, Dr. William Ryder, a distinguished physician who practised in Albion Street, Hyde Park, while the Hunter was after his grandfather, a painter of his time. That my husband had a natural bias towards painting is undoubted, and his sketches prove his talent, although he never had a lesson in his life.

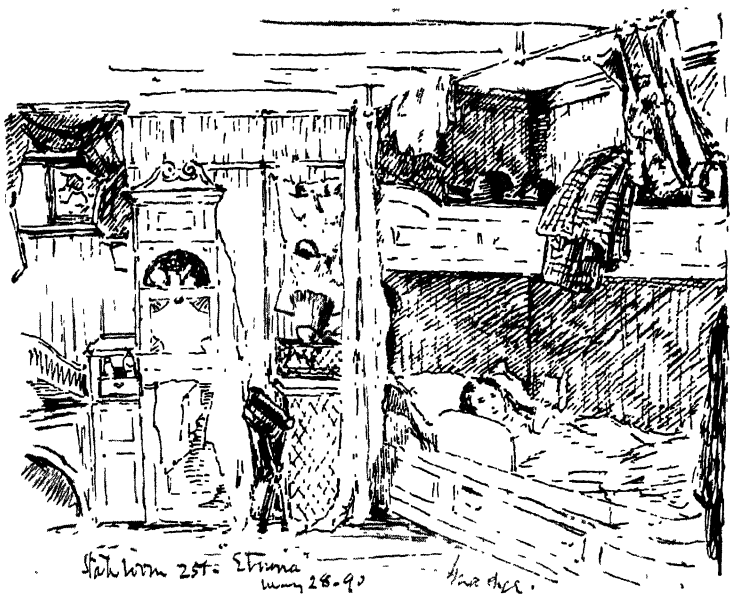
A sketch he did of Salvini as Othello was always regarded by that great actor as the finest portrait of him that was ever made. Indeed, when he saw it he exclaimed, "Magnifica." In addition, I may recall his sketch of Charles Dickens to which I refer later.

Painting as a profession in those days was regarded as scarcely less problematic, though more dignified as a means of livelihood, than music or the stage, so it was decided my husband should not be a painter but a doctor, and he actually began to study for that profession.

You may scotch the artistic impulse but you can't kill it, and while still in his teens, he used to go to the Soho Theatre (now the Royalty), Soho, whose manageress was Miss Rose Eglington and the proprietor of which was Mr. William Mowbray.

In those days, the managers of some of the theatres allowed amateurs, paying a certain sum for each character according to its importance, to take part in the performance.

It was not, however, with any inordinate desire to act,



SKETCH BY W. H. KENDAL—RETURNING HOME AFTER FIRST AMERICAN TOUR



SKETCH BY SIR FRANK LOCKWOOD, Q.C.

but to sketch the actors that my husband used to frequent the theatre.

Mr. Mowbray used to walk about the auditorium during the performance and one night he saw my husband sketching Ellen Terry, who was then an exceedingly lovely girl and a regular member of the Company which also included Charles Wyndham, David James and "Handsome" Harry Montague, who later went to New York where he died, and a window is dedicated to his memory in the "Little Church around the corner," which is also known as "The Actors' Church."

"Do you know Miss Terry?" asked Mr. Mowbray.

"No," replied my husband. "I wish I did."

That started their acquaintance, and it was not long before Mr. Mowbray said, "You're very like Charles Kemble. If you go on the stage, you must never call yourself anything but Kendal. So, Kendal, I christen you."

It was not long after—on April 6th, 1861—that the name of W. H. Kendall, spelt with two "l's" instead of the one which my husband adopted later, appeared on the programme of the Royal Theatre as the representative of Louis XIV in a play called "A Life's Revenge."

He remained at this theatre for two seasons and then he went to the Theatre Royal, Glasgow, where his first part was the bleeding Sergeant in "Macbeth." In Glasgow he used to buy his groceries at a little shop in Sauchiehall Street, over which was painted the name "T. Lipton."

The last time I met Lipton was at Lord Pirrie's house, when for years he had been Sir Thomas Lipton, Bart. On that occasion he gave me a gold brooch like a shamrock, the name of several successive yachts with which he competed unsuccessfully for the America Cup, painted across it.

For four years my husband remained in Glasgow, learning everything an actor should know, for in those days one had to play in every kind of piece and it was necessary to be able to dance, to sing and to fence, as well as to speak

so that one could be heard at the very back of the gallery, even if one whispered.

Those were the days when, instead of taking their Company and scenery with them, "stars" travelled alone and relied on the stock company in the theatres they visited to play the other parts in their repertoire, and on the stock scenery for the mounting of their plays.

Among the actors he supported were Miss Helen Faucit, Mr. Phelps, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean, Mr. Sothorn, Mr. Charles Fechter and Mr. Charles Mathews.

On one occasion, my husband was sent from Glasgow to Edinburgh to support Mr. Phelps in "The Man of the World." Rather in awe of the great man, he bungled one of his speeches at rehearsal. Mr. Phelps took the book from him and read the speech in his deep, rich, sonorous voice. "That's how you should give it," he said, handing back the book.

"Yes, Mr. Phelps," my husband replied, "but if I could do it like that, I should be earning fifty pounds a week, not two pounds ten."

This story, by the way, has been told of other stars, but it was undoubtedly my husband who made the reply which has now become historical.

When Mr. Charles Fechter, who had made a great success as Hamlet at the Lyceum Theatre, London, arrived in Glasgow, the first question he asked was, "Who is the best fencer in the theatre?"

"W. H. Kendal," was the reply.

"Very well, that's the man to play Laertes."

It was not only as a fencer that young W. H. Kendal satisfied Fechter, for whenever he could get him, he used to write and say, "Do come and help me. The English actor does not always fence well. He is a broad-sword actor!"

Mr. Charles Mathews was also so impressed by my husband's talent that he insisted on Buckstone engaging him at the Haymarket Theatre, where, on October 31st, 1866,

he made his debut in "A Dangerous Friend." The play-bill, which I still possess, announces "his first appearance from the Theatres Royal, Liverpool and Glasgow."

A few months later, when he was making arrangements for his next season, Mr. Mathews wrote to my husband :

January 22nd, 67.

"MY DEAR KENDAL,

How long are you engaged at the Haymarket? Before making any fresh arrangements I should like to have a little talk with you as something *may* turn up that might suit you.

Yours very truly,

C. H. MATHEWS."

This further proof of his admiration of my husband's ability could not be taken advantage of, for Mr. Buckstone still wanted him as leading man at the Haymarket.

In addition to playing in the principal piece in the evening, he also acted in the farce which followed the *pièce de résistance*, and was also required to play in burlesque. He made a remarkable success in "The Frightful Hair," in which Mr. F. C. Burnand parodied Lord Lytton's "The Rightful Heir," which was being played at the Lyceum by a then well-known tragedian, Herr Bandmann.

My husband's imitation of the German actor's appearance and flamboyant manner was said to be exceedingly funny and he sang a song parodying Sir Arthur Sullivan's "From Rock to Rock," which brought down the house.

From burlesque to Romeo and Orlando is a long step, but he took it successfully and he also made an enormous hit as a drunken workman in "Mary Warner," a play with Miss Bateman who afterwards charmed England and the United States by her performance of "Leah the Forsaken." Mary Warner became an exceedingly popular play, especially in the provinces, and its performance drew large numbers of policemen because the prison scenes were so well done !

My husband had been at the Haymarket Theatre for some months when I joined the company.

Although I must have seen him and noticed him,—for he was an exceedingly handsome young man, with exquisitely chiselled features, as a photograph I have in a locket he gave me eloquently attests,—weeks,—I think months,—went by before we spoke to one another, except as demanded by the parts we played.

The reason was that my father always took me to the theatre and stood with me in the wings until I made my entrance on the stage, so that nothing should disturb my concentration on the character I was trying to represent.

One night, however, when “The Rivals” was in the bill and my husband and I were playing Captain Absolute and Lydia Languish, my father was ill and did not take me to the theatre.

Just before I went on, I had a most uncomfortable attack of hiccoughs. Mr. Kendal, as, ‘of course, I used to call him, looked at me with horror and astonishment and exclaimed, “Oh, my! You’ve got a black-beetle on you!”

My one horror was and is black-beetles!!

Straightway, I fainted. The curtain had to be dropped and my father was sent for, while restoratives were applied to me.

Ill as he was, he hurried to the theatre, and though he found that I had already regained consciousness before he arrived he did much to soothe me and restore my equanimity so that I could play my part.

Mr. Buckstone was highly indignant at the idea that such a thing as a black-beetle could be found in his theatre.

He was scarcely less indignant with me for fainting, for he said, “I am astonished at your being frightened of such a thing, and your father said you were made of courage!”

When the final curtain fell on the play, my father came on to the stage and asked, “Who is the damned idiot who said there was a black-beetle on my daughter.”

“I did,” said the culprit.

I wish I could recall the language my father used. All I remember is that it was a mixture of French, Italian, Greek, Latin and bad English.

He then turned to Mr. Kendal and said, "Don't speak to my daughter when she's in the wings, and don't look at her ; then you won't see black-beetles."

My father then shook hands very coldly with Mr. Kendal and we went home.

That beetle broke the ice, for, from that night, we disregarded the paternal injunction not to speak.

To such effect did Mr. Kendal and I speak that, a few months later, Mr. Kendal called on my father,—open your eyes, all you bright young things who settle these matters for yourselves without troubling to consult your parents,—and asked him if we might become engaged.

"Is it my youngest daughter you wish to marry, sir?" asked my father.

"Yes, sir, it is," said Mr. Kendal.

"Sir, I like your courage," was my father's reply, "but if you marry Madge, you marry forty women."

After a pause, he went on, "Now let me give you some advice regarding you and her. Never in any circumstances attempt to bamboozle her in any way, for if she finds it out, even if she is in her most laughing mood, she'll turn into a vixen."

All this conversation occurred when I was not present, but I heard it, all the same, at second hand, just as I have written it, and it is indelibly imprinted in my memory.

When I was called in, my father said that, *sub rosa*, we might be engaged for six months ; then he turned to me and said, "Suppose, by keeping your engagement a secret to yourselves, at the end of the time you find you have been deceived, what will you do?"

"Do, daddy?" I replied. "Put this ring into an envelope and return it with a note saying, 'This is not meant for me. Madge.'"

On hearing my pronouncement, Mr. Kendal and my father laughed at me together.

That settled the matter for all time.

My father grew very fond of my husband and he died with my mother holding one of his hands and my husband the other, and thinking that he heard me singing.

When our temporary engagement was finally ratified, my father gave his permission for our marriage on the condition that my husband-to-be promised that as long as we acted, we should never be parted. As an actor, my father believed that the greatest amount of domestic happiness was possible to exist on the stage provided husband and wife were never separated, and he cited as examples Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean, Sarah Siddons and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Wigan, Mr. and Mrs. Keeley and many others.

If, on the other hand, because either husband or wife could earn ten pounds a week more in another theatre than that in which the other was acting, they parted as artists, their interests would become divided, their feelings might run in separate groves and, gradually drifting apart, they might be divided for ever.

Our acceptance of my father's condition we never departed from.

True, it was pointed out to me by friends and even by people with whom I was not acquainted that it would be much more interesting to see me being made love to by another man than by my own husband.

Where the interest could come in I never knew, for on the stage actors lose sight of their private personalities although they gain considerably from their intimate knowledge of each other's methods. It is the very quintessence of team work. For this reason, the interest in such scenes is enhanced to the benefit of the audience.

Against the interest of seeing me being made love to by another man and my husband making love to another woman, may be set the interest of another section of the public who always liked to see us act together. The very

fact that they knew we were lovers off the stage as well as on it gave a certain satisfaction in witnessing our performance.

Although I was married to only one husband, I might almost claim to have had two wedding ceremonies.

When, during the summer recesses, the Haymarket company went on tour and reached Edinburgh, the members were always entertained at lunch on Sunday by Mr. Robert Wyndham, the manager of the theatre, when speeches were made and healths proposed. To the toast of the ladies, the youngest bachelor always had to reply. On the first occasion after I had joined the company Mr. Kendal was the youngest bachelor.

Although at that time we had hardly ever spoken to each other off the stage, something of a romance had already sprung up between us.

The clever people who know little of life and less of love but think they know everything about both will, no doubt, say, "What else can you expect from two young people who are always making love to each other on the stage. It must affect their private feelings."

Were an actor's private feelings moved by those he assumes on the stage, it would follow logically that the actors who play villains would lead bad lives in private. Everyone knows they do not, for, if they did, their career would inevitably be brought up short by an appearance before one of His Majesty's judges and they would be incontinently marched off to a prison cell.

So far, however, as love-making on the stage affects one's private life, think for a moment what a rehearsal means. In the first place, all the members of the company are grouped about at the side of the stage looking on.

Who in the world ever makes love under such circumstances.

Again, sitting in front of the love-making couple, listening to every intonation of their voices, is the producer, while the

prompter is watching to see that the dialogue is spoken as it is written.

No, love-making on the stage is quite different from love-making off. In their private life actors and actresses are just like other men and women, moved by the same feelings, affected by the same passions, hurt by the same griefs although, being, as a rule, abnormally sensitive, they are more affected by their emotions than ordinary folk. That, however, does not apply only to actors and actresses. It is a lot they share in common with all the other people blessed,—or cursed,—with the artistic temperament,—painters, sculptors, poets and writers.

How little one can be affected by any feeling for the actor who is engaged to play one's lover was amusingly illustrated by a young lady in our company who had to say in the course of a love scene, "You are my king."

The feeling she put into the words was so far from what was desired that she was asked to go over them several times. At length she burst into tears and coming to me said, "I can't call him my king. He's not a bit like the young man I'm in love with. *He's* quite different; much better looking. Can't I speak something different, Mrs. Kendal?"

"Certainly not," I replied. "Why should you alter the author? If your good-looking young man could act as well as the actor we have engaged, it would be different and I would let him play the part, but he can't. Now dry your eyes and go through the scene again. Do what I do; imagine a face for yourself."

I gave her a picture of a very handsome man and told her, "When you say, 'you are my king' think of this picture. Get it photographed on your brain and when you think of him you won't see the ugly young man you have to act with."

She went away laughing, "Oh, Mrs. Kendal, you are a funny woman."

Love has no need of words, for does not Shakespeare tell

us in "As You Like It," that Oliver and Celia no sooner looked but they loved; and as for language, have we not Byron's authority for writing, "Soft eyes looked bright to eyes that spake again."

So it was with my husband and me. There was something so potent which drew us together in those days of our youth that it lasted until, in the words of our marriage service, "death did us part."

When, at that summer lunch in Edinburgh Mr. Kendal, as I used to call him then, rose, he began his speech with the words, "I have very little to say except to ask Miss Robertson a question before you all,—a question which I hope she will respond to in the Scotch fashion." Turning to me he said, "Will you be my wife?"

Without realising what it all meant, I nodded several times and said, "Yes, yes, yes."

When lunch was over Mr. Compton came to me and said, "I am very sorry, my child, that you responded in that way to young Kendal's speech. Your father would be furious if he knew, for Kendal could take you home as his wife, as, according to Scottish law, you accepted him before thirty witnesses."

Mr. Buckstone with a merry twinkle in his eye came across to me and said, as he did many times after, "I would not marry you, young woman, if you said, 'yes, yes, yes,' to me in the way you said it to Kendal."

Directly I went home, I told my father what had happened and he said, "Kendal is an impudent young fellow. Take no notice of him. Coventry is the county-town he should always live in."

It was a couple of years later that we were really married.

The ceremony took place in Manchester on August 7th, 1869.

The Haymarket company was then on its annual visit to the Theatre Royal.

At that time Mr. Henry Compton, the grandfather of

Miss Fay Compton, was the particular star of the company and dominated the first three of the four weeks of the season, appearing in "The Heir at Law," "Speed the Plough," and "The Poor Gentleman," three great comedies of the old school. I did not appear in any of them and my fiancé suggested to my father that we might take advantage of my being taken out of the bill to be married by special licence.

My father agreed to this and it was arranged that the ceremony should be solemnised at St. Saviour's Church at ten o'clock in the morning,—a Saturday.

On the Friday evening, however, we were told that Mr. Compton had been summoned to the deathbed of his father whose name was Mackenzie. Mr. Compton was the elder brother of the late Sir Morel Mackenzie, the famous throat specialist who, at the express wish of the German Empress Frederick (Princess Royal of Great Britain), was summoned to Berlin to operate on the Emperor Frederick, "The Ninety Days Emperor."

As Mr. Compton could not get back in time to act in the evening, "As You Like It," had to be substituted. Mr. Compton was not in the cast of this play as Mr. Buckstone played Touchstone and could always go on for it without the necessity of rehearsing.

In the circumstances, I was told, that, in spite of our private arrangements, my husband-elect and I would have to play Orlando and Rosalind.

I shall never forget my mother's despair when she was told I should have to act on my wedding day.

"As you have to act to-morrow, you must put off the ceremony," she said.

"We can't, mother," I replied. "We can't afford it," while my husband asked, "But, Mrs. Robertson, do you know what a special licence costs?"

"No," snapped my mother, "and I don't care."

I did not understand at all why she should make so much fuss about it, but of course, I do now.

My father was not well enough to be present at the ceremony but my mother graced it with her presence and her blessing.

My father's letter in which he told me all that a wife is expected to do and also what he expected *me* to do I treasured and still have.

In the evening my husband and I went to the theatre believing that no one knew anything about the happy ceremony of the morning beyond Mr. Walter Gordon, an old friend who gave me away, and two members of the company who accompanied us to the church.

When, however, Celia said, "Will you, Orlando, have to wife this Rosalind?" and Orlando answered, "I will," the audience broke out into applause. It was a most unexpected and bewildering experience, but it was evidence of the interest the Manchester public took in us, as well as their appreciation of the romantic sentiment attaching to the marriage of two young people who had won their favour.

When shortly after our marriage we used to go out and were announced as Mr. and Mrs. Grimston, our private names instead of as Mr. and Mrs. Kendal, our professional ones, people used to ask if we had been married long. "Yes, years and years," my husband used to reply to their great surprise, remembering his Scottish proposal.

When, at the end of Mr. Buckstone's tour, we were returning to London, my husband's mother engaged temporary rooms for us in an admirably appointed house in the Regent's Park neighbourhood.

They were very comfortable and beautifully furnished. We had a sitting-room, a dining-room, a bedroom, a dressing-room and a bathroom, and the service, with a butler to wait on us and an excellent cook who prepared our meals, made our early housekeeping days everything we could desire.

One evening, as I waited in the hall for my husband to join me to go to the theatre, I heard a latch-key put into

the front door which opened and to my amazement a gentleman entered.

"Miss Robertson," he exclaimed in a tone of great surprise.

At that moment my husband came downstairs and was greeted with a still more surprised, "Hullo, Kendal, what are you doing in my house?"

"Your house?" I exclaimed. "We are living here."

"I think I had better see you in private for five minutes, Kendal," exclaimed the newcomer.

When we were driving to the theatre my husband explained that his acquaintance had installed in the house a lady who, during his not infrequent long absences on business, let furnished apartments in order to increase the income he allowed her.

We went to my mother-in-law's that night, and, luckily for us, our first little house was ready during the following week.

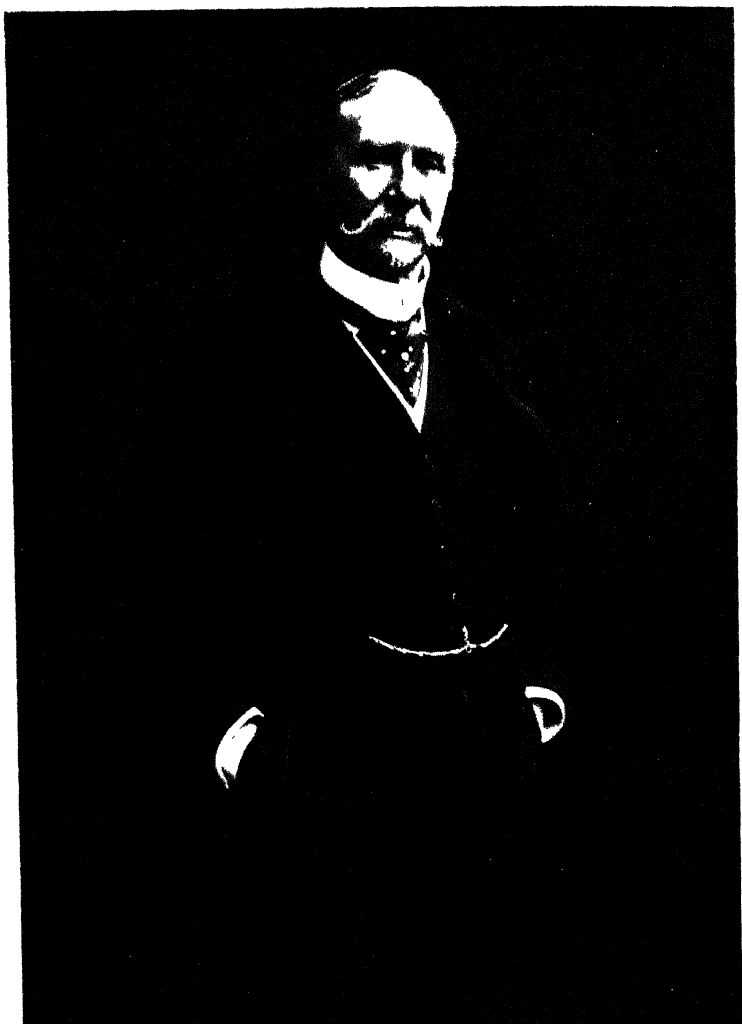
This was Tower Villa, Park Villas East, where my daughter Margaret was born.

This house was next door to the home of Mrs. Charles Dickens. She and I became very good friends and she not only taught me how to cut out baby clothes which I made when my own children were born, but she often read me various letters her husband had written to her when they were engaged.

In one of Mrs. Dickens's rooms there was the portrait of the great novelist which my husband borrowed to copy.

The sketch he made was regarded everywhere as an exceedingly good one and when, later, a benefit was got up for Mrs. Dickens's grandchildren I sent this portrait to the *Daily Telegraph* which was interested in the project and suggested it should be sold by auction for the fund. It was bought for fifteen pounds by the first Lord Burnham.

After our marriage, the world knows that our lives were lived side by side, both professionally and privately.



W. H. KENDAL IN PRIVATE LIFE

[Elliott & Fry.]

Readers who recall my engagement in the "Merry Wives of Windsor," may argue that as I was not—the only time in our life,—acting with my husband, our compact was broken. It was, however, strictly kept in the spirit, for he was not acting anywhere else.

In spite of our private relationship, from the time my husband went into management until we retired, I always drew a strong line between my position as his wife and that of a member of the company. For this reason I never went into the theatre through the front of the house but by the stage door, like every other actress. When we reached the theatre I always used to say, "Good-bye, Willie, I'm going to my work. I have a horrid manager, but a darling husband whom I shall meet when my work is over."

In that perfect agreement both professionally and privately we dwelt together until his dear soul was swallowed in the Ocean of Eternity.

"My beloved husband died of a broken heart and wounded pride." His passing in November 1917 was the occasion of innumerable tributes to him both as a man and an actor, and I was the recipient of many expressions of sympathy which I shall treasure "while memory holds a seat in this distracted globe."

Queen Alexandra, whose own life had been bereft of her husband, remembered another woman in her grief and sent me a gracious message which, however, I cannot quote, although I keep the written words in my treasure box.

In 1927 I designed, and the late Sir George Frampton, R.A., executed for me, a bronze panel which I presented to the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in memory of my husband.

In making the presentation, to which several of his friends had been invited, I took occasion to remark on what I have often said in private,—that the members of his own profession had paid my dear husband the greatest compliment that ever had been paid to an actor, for no one, since

his death, had ever dared to play a single one of his parts with which his name was originally associated, except in "Diplomacy."

A day or two after, to my amazement, I received a long letter from Mr. Bernard Shaw from which I permit myself to make the following extract :—

December 17th, 1927.

MY DEAR MRS. KENDAL,

My success in the theatre, such as it is, comes so late and was such a *succes de scandale* that I am sure you never think of me as a contemporary, but I remember the old company at the Haymarket as well as you do ; and if Buckstone and Howe and Mrs. Fitzwilliam and the Chippendales had walked into Gower Street on Thursday I should have known them at once. You are still Madge Robertson to me and I remember Kendal in "His First Champagne" as clearly as in Orlando or William in "William and Susan" or the Knight of the "Wicked World" or any of the parts I saw him in long after *Erster Liebhabers* were no longer expected to pad out the programme with farce and curtain raisers.

If you knew how many performances I have utterly forgotten since then, even in my own plays (Hush ! Not a word to anyone ! !) you would better understand why I was so glad to hear you claiming his place for him on Friday.

Kendal, except for his specific talents as an actor, was a normal English gentleman. He could present any part with complete naturalness except grotesques and monsters. . . . What is true about Kendal was that he did to some extent sacrifice himself.

Until Friday last I never knew that your father had committed your husband to—in professional language—a Perpetual Joint.

Missed careers are not uncommon on the stage. Kendal may have missed some of his when he became your leading man.

In this last statement Mr. Shaw is mistaken. My husband never was my leading man. I was always his leading lady.

My husband was a very proud man. Everyone who met him during his life must have realised that. I need not, therefore, say what he suffered when that pride was attacked, as it was to the quick, when he was nearly fifty years old.

For some time he waited hoping, every year, to hear the words, "I beg your pardon."

Our troubles grew deeper and deeper and our grief

increased, for we all know that one bad example leads others astray, and after his youngest daughter married against his wishes at a registry office and was afterwards divorced, he never raised his head. He adored her. She was a pretty girl and had many good chances.

We had had many disappointments, but this was the one he could not fight.

He left to each of his children,—there were four alive when he died,—five thousand pounds each : twenty thousand pounds in all, and not five thousand pounds altogether, as has been falsely stated.

When we gave up all hope of any sign of affection from our family, he bought an annuity for me, asking me if I minded when his Will was published if it was found that it was but a small one.

What does it matter what the outside world knows. We must pay the penalty for all we endeavoured to do and have failed in.

You know all public people are talked about and discussed in their family and private relations much more than if they were private people.

This is the penalty we have to pay, and you and I have borne it now together for thirty years.

Patience ; endurance ; and leave the rest to God.

These are some of the words he left in his dear handwriting in his last letter to me.

I have endeavoured to carry out what he desired under fearful circumstances.

Of the later years of his life when we were alone together I will not trust myself to write, but I do believe that after all the agonies we passed through and we hoped there was nothing worse to face, his life was, to some extent, more tranquil.

One of his clubs was the Junior Carlton, and the regard he entertained for it was evidently reciprocated, for, after his death, the members of the billiard circle where he used to play asked if they might keep his cue which I understand now hangs in its case over the mantelpiece.

His portrait by Hugh Walpole hangs in the Garrick Club.

I hated to part with it, but I thought it better I should see the position in which it was hung. Lord Buckmaster, the Chairman of the Club, was most kind in the matter. I went one day to take my last farewell of it.

I hope some of my readers will give a kind thought to the memory of my dear husband who was a most upright and straightforward creature.

Each year that I live I think more of his qualities than I did before.

He stands alone, in my eyes, as Husband, Father and Friend.

CHAPTER V

MARGARET

MY daughter Margaret inherited my mother's love of animals. There is nothing that can live in a nursery that I have not lived with.

We began with silkworms. Then the nursery walls were always covered with cones of paper, each containing a chrysalis into which her eager eyes used to peer, watching anxiously for the butterflies to come out.

She was next devoted to ants, kept in a box covered with glass so that it was possible to see them at work. She used constantly to say when I went into the nursery, "Come, mamma, and see them building bridges." I saw nothing.

These little boxes were due, if my memory is correct, to a suggestion from Sir John Lubbock who was a devoted student of ant-ology, if I may venture to coin the word, and who has almost been canonised in the calendar as the friend of the white-collared, black-coated worker, for it is he to whom bank holidays are due.

At a later date we kept larger animals in the shape of cats, dogs, rabbits and guinea-pigs. At that time we had some friends living at Putney who numbered twelve or fourteen in family, and the children adored animals as mine did.

One Sunday we all went to tea and I was asked which I preferred, tea in the drawing-room or tea in the nursery. I said, "Tea in the nursery." As soon as I appeared I was surrounded by a large party, each of whom had, apparently, a child in her arms, wrapped in a shawl, a

towel or a piece of some material. Presently these were opened and dogs, cats, guinea pigs and rabbits were exhibited to my gaze, while the children imitated the crying of babies.

I was informed that the occasion represented Hospital Sunday and I was visiting the wards.

As I sat down, my Margaret came up to me and said, "Dear mamma, nurse these," and she placed in my lap a black rat and a white rat whose names, she informed me, were Brandy and Soda. I gasped, almost speechless with fear. "Don't you like them, mamma," she exclaimed, "Then nurse something else."

At that moment I realised I much preferred tea in the drawing-room.

One day, one of these children went to Putney Heath and, playing with a strange dog, her nose was nearly bitten off. Her nurse immediately took her home, the doctor was sent for and her nose re-adjusted. As a punishment she was sent to bed for a week, although she declared she had done nothing.

Happily, her nose healed without marring her undoubted beauty. A little later she went to the Heath with her governess and returned home with an adder wrapped in her handkerchief.

At Filey, in Yorkshire, we had a cottage called the Lodge. From the time Margaret was a very small child, I had always inculcated in her the necessity of keeping her hands and nails clean, especially her thumb-nails. One beautiful Sunday evening when the moon was at half-quarter, we were all sitting on the verandah when she turned to me and said, "Mamma, aren't you happy to-night?"

"Am I?" I asked.

"Yes, I know you're filled with joy."

"Am I?" I repeated, "Why?"

"Because,"—and she waved her little hand towards the moon,—“you see how clean God keeps *His* thumb-nail.”

Among my daughter's friends was a little girl of six or seven whom we called Mary.

She, too, was devoted to animal pets and treasured a canary which died. It was a matter of such sobbing and tears that my husband suggested it should have a "state" funeral, as the surest means of pacifying the little mourners.

Accordingly, a box was prepared in which the canary was placed and bits of crêpe were bound in our hats and on our arms. The children and we walked in the procession which was headed by Mary as chief mourner, immediately after my husband who acted as undertaker and clergyman.

To console Mary, her mother and I, with her sitting opposite, drove to the neighbouring village and bought a new canary. On returning, Mary, who always called me "Darling Granny Grimmie," fidgeted a great deal. I asked her what was the matter. "Darling Granny Grimmie," she replied, "I must scratch, as I think I must have caught one of Mrs. Tompkins's fleas."

Mrs. Tompkins was the seller of the canary and always looked as if she must have one or two with her,—fleas, not canaries.

At Filey, the children were enamoured of the pierrots who appeared on the sands. More than the rest they adored the comedian who sang a song in which he declared :

We took the women and children,
And threw them into the sea
And the only man on board that ship
That was drowned was *me*.

Many were the pennies of the hard-worked Kendals which were thrown to him after he had sung that song. One day he appeared and asked for our patronage for their forthcoming benefit in the evening. Of course, we willingly gave it and the whole family attended.

The children's gloves were all broken beyond repair with their energetic clapping of hands.

A day or two after, Margaret walked into her father's study and announced, "The pierrots are here."

"I think we've had enough of those pierrots, my dear," said my husband. "Send them away."

"Oh, father, I can't send the pierrots away. They're just outside the door."

My husband went into the hall and found her two black pugs sitting on chairs, dressed in exact imitation of the pierrots. She had imitated their dress to the utmost nicety and the dogs seemed to have caught the expression of the pierrots. How we laughed!

We had to go to Mary's parents who lived opposite and bring them and her over to join our children in their idiotic fun.

When it was wet, I used to play that well-known card game, "Old Maid," with the children.

I always was that wretched female.

"Oh, Darling Grannie Grimmie," Mary used to say. "You're always Old Maid. I'm so sorry."

"Mary, my child, don't worry; my day's over."

Margaret was adored by the people of Filey and the neighbouring villages who, in their prosaic way, regarded her as the embodiment of the poet's couplet:

When pain and sickness rack the brow,
A ministering angel thou,

for, with a basket over her arm, she used to take them creature comforts. One day, as she approached a cottage where the old wife was lying ill in bed, her husband shouted, "Now then, Missis, cheer up, I see t'angel with t'brandy bottle."

I always found these villagers interesting folk with an unusual outlook on life.

Once, as my husband and I were driving past the church-yard, we met two of the residents with market baskets on their arm. The conversation of these people always interested me, so we pulled up for a moment and overheard one say to the other, "Come yere, Betty, and look

at this churchyard. Wasn't it kind of the squire to give us this lovely bit of ground ? ”

“ It's a grand do, it's a grand do,” said Betty.

“ Yes, Betty, it's a grand bit of ground, and look, it's filling up nicely.”

Very early Margaret adopted the plan of naming her pets after the parts my husband and I played, and christened two green frogs for whom she made a home in a bottle with a tree and twigs, Lord and Lady Guilderoy, the title of a drama by Mr. Hamilton Aidé.

On one occasion, at Filey, we had friends staying in the house at a time when we possessed the stupidest housemaid even I ever had met. She rushed into the room in which we were sitting and said, “ Oh, Miss Margaret, come quickly ; Lord Guilderoy is dead.”

As Margaret rushed out to find Lord Guilderoy on the floor, one of the visitors turned to me and said, “ I had no idea you knew the Guilderoys.”

“ I don't,” I said, “ they are green frogs.”

Once, when we were acting in Manchester and Margaret accompanied us, we were staying with some friends who had a home-farm.

In the sty a sow had just had a litter of seven or eight little pigs. As most people know, the last one is generally very small. Margaret screamed with delight when she saw it and said, “ Mother, do let us have the tiny one to take home.”

“ But where can we keep it and where will it sleep ? ” I exclaimed.

“ On my eiderdown, mother ; it will sleep comfortably on my eiderdown ! ”

One day, Lady Dorothy Neville came to see us. In her hand she carried a cage, covered up very carefully. She informed me it contained a pair of dancing mice which she knew Margaret would love to have. They were very tiny creatures, half brown, half white. She told me that they woke up in the middle of the night and danced, so

that they needed a wheel in their cage. She left them, with written instructions regarding their food, their life and everything connected with them.

Margaret was called down into the drawing-room and promised she and her father, together, would carry out all the instructions, one of the most particular being that, some times, the lady dancer must be put in the dark part of the cage as there she would have her family more comfortably.

I am grieved to say that my husband and daughter failed to carry out this injunction. The gentleman dancer was put in the dark and the lady had her family in the open daylight of the cage.

In the course of five or six weeks, we had sixty mice !

I then bought a cage, indeed, several cages, and, in imitation of my betters, I left two dancing mice on every friend on my visiting list who would take them.

I, however, left no instructions regarding the dark part of the cage ! There, I was superior, at least, in contemplation. In spite of my efforts in disposing of the family we still had seven or eight dancing mice left which Margaret took with us to America. They were a great and marvellous success on board the steamer.

In the great Zoo in Cincinnati I once found Margaret nursing two baby tigers which she assured me were "darlings." She had no fear of any kind of animal.

She called her family "the Thompsons" and had cards printed for them which she left on her friends who liked animals and called on her family.

I am very sorry to say that the Thompsons often gave parties and the "Matron of the Drama" was invariably asked to give her patronage to them. When all the dogs barked and the parrots screamed with delight, we were a wild and merry family.

To the end of her life her love of animals persisted. Among other things she kept marmoset monkeys, tiny



MARGARET, AGED 16

creatures, and when we lost her, we found that she had left detailed instructions in her will as to how the animals should be disposed of; her greatest friend was given her white rat called Pauline.

When Margaret was about eleven years old, Lady Wolseley, the wife of Sir Garnet Wolseley, as he was then, "England's only General," as he was called, got up some children's performances and asked me to allow her to take part with her own daughter and some friends.

Here is a copy of the playbill :

VI. HILL STREET

MARCH 1883

"OLD POZ"

(MISS EDGEWORTH)

Justice Headstrong	Harold Russell.
Lucy (His daughter)	Daisy Grimston.
Mrs. Bustle (landlady of the Saracen's Head)	Flora Russell.
Old Man	Claude Russell.
Sambo (a servant)	Diana Russell.

"SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL"

"Quarrel Scene"

(SHERIDAN)

Sir Peter Teazle	Harold Russell.
Lady Teazle	Frances Wolseley.

KURMARKER AND PICARDE

1813—FRANCE.

(SCHNEIDER).

Marie (a Peasant Girl of Picardy)	Flora Russell.
Wilhelm Schultze (a Prussian Soldier)	Frances Wolseley.

Frances Wolseley was Lady Wolseley's daughter and later inherited her father's title, while Harold, Claude, Flora and Diana Russell were the children of Lord and Lady Arthur Russell.

The first performance took place on Wednesday, March 14th, 1883, at 4 p.m., and the second the following Saturday, when the audience was one of the most distinguished which was ever gathered together. It consisted of: H.R.H. the Princess of Wales, with their Royal Highnesses the Princesses Louise, Victoria and Maud of Wales; their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh (later, the Duke and Duchess of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha) with Prince Alfred and the Princesses Marie, Victoria, and Olga of Edinburgh; H.R.H. the Duchess of Teck with Princess Mary (now H.M. Queen Mary) and Prince Alexander of Teck; Lord and Lady Arthur Russell; Lord and Lady Wolseley; Col. the Hon. W. F. Colville and Mrs. Colville; Mr. and Mrs. Kendal Grimston.

The second performance was really by command of the Princess of Wales, who called the children "artists" and made the three royal princesses shake hands with them all.

The late Duchess of Teck in particular noticed Daisy, in whom she was interested, and whenever, later, I had the privilege of meeting H.R.H. she always enquired, "How is my little Daisy?"

At that time, and long before, there was the closest union between us and even to-day it is a solace to think of Margaret's devotion for me, both as a mother and an actress, from the time she was a little girl. Two examples of this occur to me.

One day we had a little party and she was allowed in the drawing-room, when one of our friends asked her if she had seen the Queen.

"The Queen," she echoed, looking round. "I don't see her in the room."

"Of course you don't," replied our friend. "I was talking of Queen Victoria."

"Oh," she replied, "I thought you were speaking of my mother."

An example of her appreciation of my work in the

theatre occurred when we were playing "The Ironmaster" and she was about seventeen.

After a *matinée*, I asked her, "How did Miss — get on in her big scene?"

"Did she have a big scene, mother?" she asked. "I don't think anybody noticed it. We were so busy looking at what you were doing at the back."

When Margaret was twenty-one, I wrote her a poem from which I quote the following stanzas :

TO DAISY

ON HER 21ST BIRTHDAY

Sweet child of my girlhood,
On this thy natal day,
In what language can I tell thee,
In what feeble words convey
One thousandth part of all the love,
Of all the deeper joy
I feel for thee, my gentle one—
My child *without* alloy !

If God in His high wisdom
Shall have sent thee ills to bear,
Why He has sent thee strength and youth,
Two attributes so rare !
To bear those other smaller griefs,
To prove thou art a woman.

"*We always are alone*," dear child,
Some gifted soul has sung ;
Therefore our lives we make ourselves,
A vile or noble one.
If I could give thee life again
I'd have thee as thou art—
My baby girl, my Daisy !—
Of myself the *better* part,
I'd have thee tall and pale and thin,
With such dear pretty ways,
As thou hast always kept,
Since thy tiny baby days.
I'd have thee always cheerful,
I'd have thee always bright ;
To keep always near thy mother—
And to pray with all my might

That thou mayst remain for ever
My one joy—that I can say,
I will keep thee *still* the same
As thou art, my love, to-day !

MOTHER.

She certainly had “ills to bear,” and she bore them with strength, for when the time came for her to be married to the man of her choice, the marriage had to be annulled.

One day when the matter had become public property, I was sent for by H.R.H. the Duchess of Teck, who asked me, “Is this my little Daisy ? ”

“Yes, ma’am,” I replied. “It is.”

Her Royal Highness was exceedingly sympathetic and offered me some valuable advice as to the attitude I should adopt under the circumstances.

Although that event overclouded my daughter’s life and still overclouds mine, for she never recovered from the shock, her loyalty to the family of the man she married never wavered.

With a lack of feeling which is scarcely believable more than one of our acquaintances called and tried to pump me on the subject. I remember one in particular who plied me with many questions, pertinent—and impertinent. Whenever I turned as if to answer, my daughter pressed my arm or attracted my attention in some way or asked a question. When our importunate visitor left, I asked what was the meaning of her constant interruptions.

She replied, “I wanted you not to answer those questions, mother. Whatever happens, it is a subject on which we must always be silent.”

Her sympathy with anyone she cared for was as unbounded as her desire to help him out of any difficulty, even when his own folly had caused it.

One day she came to me and said, “Mother, you know how I love ——” —and she mentioned the name of someone I also loved—“well, a detective is after him. It appears

he ordered some suits of clothes from a tailor, did not pay for them and pawned them. Some little time ago the tailor found out who his family is and has set detectives on his track."

"How can I help him in these circumstances?" I asked.

"As soon as I heard about it," she replied, "I went immediately to father's solicitor and he told me the best way out of the difficulty is for — to be sent to Boulogne by the night boat to-night and for him to stay there for a fortnight. While he is away, the clothes must be redeemed, returned to the tailor and compensation paid for their use. As soon as these conditions are complied with he can return to England. Now I want you to give me the money."

The money was given to her and she carried out the terrible business herself.

On one occasion she went to stay with some friends at Besançon. When she returned, she brought, as a souvenir of her visit, a large photograph of Bouguereau's well-known picture, "Mater Afflicta."

"Oh, Margaret," I said, "what a melancholy picture."

"I think it is one of Bouguereau's best," she replied. "That's why I've brought it to you."

By that time she knew many of the sad facts of my life and, though I said nothing to her about it, I wondered whether it was not a curious divination of the appeal it would make to me that made her select it.

So impressed was I with its applicability that I had the words engraved on the tombstone which will, in time, be placed over my grave.

Margaret inherited her great-grandfather's skill in languages and was particularly interested in German. We bought the rights of a German play which she translated and we produced later under the title of "Mrs. Hamilton's Silence."

It was an admirable adaptation and a very clever play,

but I always thought it too sad to win a popular success, although I believe it would find an acceptable place in a repertory company. It gave a great opportunity to me and I loved acting Mrs. Hamilton. One scene in it, in which she permits her husband's head clerk to be sent to prison for the crime of her son, always affected me most deeply.

At the end of the play she says to the man who is the ex-convict and has already discovered to whom he owes his betrayal, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us."

I told my Margaret that in my opinion it was too Biblical a quotation to end a play, and, moreover, I feared some of the audience might not like it. "Mamma, I've dreamed of you saying those words. No others fit the situation; and, isn't it like our own lives,—as we forgive them that trespass against us."

When we decided to produce the play, my husband turned and said, "Now, my dear authoress, as a beginner, what are your terms?"

Answering her father with a humorous twinkle in her eye she said, "Twenty-five or fifty pounds down and three guineas a night every time the piece is played, like Arthur Pinero."

How we all laughed.

"Do you require a written contract?" asked my husband.

"No," replied our daughter. "Although I wouldn't trust a manager, I will my father."

It was not long after this that she fell ill and died.

One morning about eighteen months after her death, on coming downstairs I found a letter addressed to me in her writing. I opened it and discovered that it purported to be written by her "from Heaven" and gave me instructions with regard to the sending of money to the person mentioned in it.

That is the purport of most anonymous letters.



MISS GRIMSTON, BY HER FATHER

What a shocking, heartless thing to do ! What an agony it caused ! But the perpetrators have all been gathered to their fathers to render their account.

As my husband and I stood together one day by her grave he said to me, "All the children that loved us, Madge, lie here under this stone."

CHAPTER VI

LONDON

THE success I made at Bradford determined Mr. Buckstone to bring me to London and make me a member of the Haymarket Theatre Company.

When he wrote offering my father a three years' engagement for me at a salary of ten pounds, twelve pounds and fifteen pounds a week respectively, my father handed the letter to my mother. She was very apprehensive of the future, and she said, "Yes, splendid; but what shall we do at the end of the third year, now that you and I have left the profession?"

It was not, however, with Mr. Buckstone that I made my London debut but with Mr. Walter Montgomery, a well-graced actor who was exceedingly popular in the provinces and hoped to be equally so in London. He took the theatre for a six weeks' season which began on July 29th, 1865, and my London debut was made as Ophelia to his Hamlet.

The revival was not a success and was followed by "King John," in which I played Blanche of Spain.

Again, the bill was soon changed for Othello, in which I was cast for Desdemona. For this production Mr. Montgomery, who played Iago, engaged Mr. Ira D. Aldridge, who was starring at the time as the "African Roscius."

I have few recollections of him in the part, for I was, naturally, more concerned with my own at the few rehearsals we had and I was absorbed in acting the character while I was on the stage.

Two things, however, still remain in my memory. One is that when Othello said, "Your hand, Desdemona," Mr.

Aldridge opened his hand and made me place mine in it to emphasise the difference in their colour. How he managed it, I never could make out, but the effect he produced was so great that the audience always rewarded it with a round of applause.

In the last act, in which he made me wear toed stockings with sandals to suggest being undressed, he used to take me out of bed by my hair and drag me round the stage before he smothered me. So brutal did it seem that the audience hissed the business vociferously.

Years later when, at the request of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales (afterwards King Edward), Madame Jenny Lind accepted the post of teacher of singing at the Royal College of Music, she did me the honour to ask me to teach her pupils how to speak.

When I called the first roll I found the name of Miss Aldridge at the top of the list. She told me she was the daughter of the gentleman with whom I had played Desdemona at the Haymarket, and naturally, I at once took the greatest interest in her.

At the end of one session at the Royal College of Music the girls came to me and asked if I could induce Madame Jenny Lind to sing to them.

"I don't think I can," I replied, "but I will try."

I accordingly went to her and said, "Dear Madame, the girls are mad to hear you sing. They have learnt how to produce their voices and they want to hear you do it."

"What can I sing to them?" asked the great artist.

"Sing them that verse from 'The Daughter of the Regiment,' which begins 'farewell, my comrades.'"

After a great deal of persuasion, she sat down to the piano and sang, "Adieux, mes camarades," as it will never be sung again.

In a little while, I think, she forgot where she was and sang to a created audience of her own imagination.

When it was over, the girls were wild with delight. They kissed her hands, they kissed her shoulders, they kissed the

back of her head, they bent and kissed the hem of her skirt. "Encore! Encore! Encore!" they cried with one voice.

She shook her head. "No; no encores. They are things that I never cared very much for in my professional career and we won't have any encores to-day."

Sir Charles Villiers Stanford followed her as Professor at the College. Like all men, he was very modern and did not approve of anything so old-fashioned as Madame Jenny Lind.

Autre temps—other music!

Still, nothing can rob us of our memories, and this gracious lady stands as a picture in my mind's eye of one of the most charming figures in my early womanhood.

After three years at the College where I produced three operas in addition to giving my weekly lessons, I told Sir George Grove, the head of the institution, that I wished to retire.

I was sent for by H.R.H. Prince Christian, the President, who said, smiling, "No professor, Mrs. Kendal, can send in his or her notice, but we can dismiss you."

"Please, your Royal Highness, will you do so?"

He did.

On my retirement, the President, my friends and pupils presented me with a beautiful blotting-book on which I have written many of the foolish things which you, dear reader, are now indulging in.

Many years later my husband and I met Mr. Goldsmid, Madame Jenny Lind's widower. He had lived in England for nearly forty years, but his English was still a little strange.

"Ah, Kendal, *mon cher*, you remember me; Goldsmid. I vos de 'usband of de died Jenny Lind."

I replied, "She never died, Mr. Goldsmid; she lives as an immortal."

With Mr. Montgomery, I went to open the new Theatre Royal, Nottingham, the management of which he had undertaken. My grandfather had built a theatre there and

the name of Robertson was, naturally, therefore a popular one in the town. It was a curious coincidence that my sister was the last to sing the National Anthem in my grandfather's theatre before it closed and I sang the first verse of "God Save the Queen" at the opening of the new house.

After a short time I left Nottingham, for an engagement had been obtained for me at the Theatre Royal, Hull, under the management of Mr. William Brough, one of the celebrated and witty "Brough Brothers," whose burlesques were so famous at the time.

In one of Mr. Brough's burlesques I played Papillonetta and wore wings that flapped, invented by him. After being wound up, the wings moved for about ten minutes, when I ran off the stage to have them wound up again.

It was at this time that one of the most important events of my life occurred. It was the week of the Hull fair and that great actor Mr. Samuel Phelps, one of the few real geniuses I have ever met in the course of my life, came to the theatre to play for three nights. He had selected for his performances "Richelieu," in which I played Julie, the heroine, "The Man of the World," in which I acted the comedy part, and "Macbeth."

Mr. Phelps himself never came to rehearsal. His manager rehearsed for him, telling the actors where they were to stand in relation to him and also describing any particular "business" he wished them to do.

When it came to the one rehearsal for "Macbeth" on the morning of the day it was to be produced, it was found that the actress cast for Lady Macbeth was ill and would be unable to play in the evening. When Mr. Brough informed Mr. Phelps's manager of this fact he was, naturally, considerably disturbed. "What are we going to do about it?" he asked.

"Well," said Mr. Brough. "Madge Robertson knows the words."

"A child like that play Lady Macbeth to Mr. Phelps! It's preposterous!"

"It's that child or nothing," said Mr. Brough. "Anyway, she's letter perfect in the part and she'll get through."

The fortunate incident of my being letter perfect in the part, as I was in most of the ordinary Shakespeare plays, was due to my father making me study them in order to be ready in just such emergencies.

How the matter was settled between Mr. Phelps and the manager I never knew. I did not see him that evening until, dressed in a costume of my mother's, as Lady Macbeth, I met him on the stage after reading the letter.

I had always been told that a subject knelt in the presence of his sovereign and, therefore, after greeting Macbeth as "great Glamis! worthy Cawdor!" when I spoke the line, "Greater than both by the all hail hereafter," I went down on my knees and prostrated myself before him.

Mr. Phelps's look of surprise at what was to him an unaccustomed piece of "business" was amazing.

My action, however, in no way disturbed him. He held out his hands and bent down to assist me to my feet again. At the end of the scene, when we made our exit together, he saw my father standing in the wings and murmured, "Robertson, she's original."

Mr. Phelps's generous encomium was more than ratified by the audience with which I had already become a favourite so that they were ready to forgive all shortcomings on my part, especially as Mr. Brough, recognising the hazardous nature of the experiment of a girl in her middle teens playing so exacting a part, had announced on the playbills that I was essaying the character "for the first time."

The audience cheered me vociferously,—proof that if one is favourably regarded the public will ignore any lack of experience, art and knowledge in the pleasure it makes for itself in applauding the favoured one.

Over and over again I was called before the curtain to bow my acknowledgments.

Mr. Phelps, however, did not take me before the curtain. When he went on alone, the audience shouted at him,

“Bring her out.” This so enraged a strapping young man in the gallery that he made his way to the stage door and demanded to see my father, to whom he said, “Ay, Mr. Robertson, if thou say’st t’word, I’ll duck him in t’Humber ; he’s not brought on our Madge.”

In order to avoid such a contretemps which, I am sure, would have occurred, for the young man had a following of gallery boys behind him, my father had to take the great actor out by the front door of the theatre.

Mr. Phelps, however, did not resent the incident in any way, for later, when I came to London, he did me the honour to invite me to play Lady Teazle to his Sir Peter, in “The School for Scandal,” which was acted for his benefit at the Standard Theatre, Shoreditch. I was the youngest actress who ever played that character.

I suppose at some time or other every actor and actress on the stage gets his tongue in a knot and is guilty of a “spoonerism.” One of the funniest in my own experience happened that night in the opening scene of “The School for Scandal.”

The play begins, as everyone knows, with an interview between Lady Sneerwell and Mr. Snake and she asks, “Have you inserted those paragraphs, Mr. Snake?” to which he replies, “Yes, madam,” adding that he had copied them himself in a feigned hand so that no one would know who had sent them.

Unhappily the actress got flurried and asked, “Have you inserted those snakes, Mr. Paragraph?” which so upset the actor that he replied, “Yes, your Majesty,” and stopped.

Poor fellow, he had already played that week in “The Man of the World,” “Macbeth,” and “Richelieu,” so forgive him !

The only part I really wanted to act in “Macbeth” was Macduff, not because I ever desired to play men’s parts, but because he has the great domestic scene in the play as the fond husband and parent who, as he says, lost “all

my pretty ones at one fell swoop," for, like him, I have been overwhelmed by maternal tragedy so that I am what I call myself always—" *Mater Afflicta*."

Although, like Macduff, I "dispute it like a man," yet like him, too, "I must also feel it as a man," though I keep all the sorrow and disgrace hidden from the world.

So enterprising a manager was Mr. Brough that, the year before he engaged Mr. Phelps, he induced the greatest operatic tenor of his day, Mario, to accept an engagement during the week of the fair.

He was accompanied by Madame Grisi. I remember the extraordinary impression that great singer produced not only on the audience but on me. He fully realised that wonderful couplet the poet, Owen Meredith, the second Lord Lytton, wrote of him :

Mario can soothe with a tenor note
The souls in purgatory.

The generosity of the Hull public made me a star in spite of my youth, for I was only seventeen, and in proof of this position I was given a benefit, for only stars took benefits in those days. Mr. Brough offered it to me as he did not think I was being paid a sufficiently large salary ! But then he was a man with a heart and a brain. An enthusiast from head to foot.

From Hull my father took me as a star at seventeen to the Theatre Royal, Liverpool where I played Juliet, Pauline in "The Lady of Lyons," and Peg Woffington in Tom Taylor's famous drama, "Masks and Faces."

Harry Byron was the manager of the theatre in partnership, I think, with Mr. Whitty, the father of Dame May Whitty.

One day, at rehearsal, he chaffingly said to me, "Madge, we don't do that sort of thing in Liverpool. Do you act like that in Sleaford?"

"I think you had better be quiet about the Lincoln circuit," I said hotly, "or I may box your ears."

I would have done it, too, in those days.

These parts I then played in Nottingham, and while there I was engaged for my first and only engagement at Drury Lane, as the heroine of Mr. Andrew Halliday's drama, "The Great City."

In this play a popular effect, proving Mr. Vincent Crummle's contention that people are willing to pay to see on the stage real things they can see in the street for nothing, was a real hansom cab drawn by a real horse. As a rule, the animal was very docile, but one night it bolted when it was driven on to the stage and nearly jumped into the private box in which the Baroness Burdett-Coutts was sitting. So sudden and startling was the incident that the conductor bolted for his life out of his seat in the orchestra.

On the first night of this play my brother Tom, who had, recently, had one of his plays produced with success, came after the performance to take me home, as my parents were ill with anxiety and excitement. As we drove along he said to me, "I can tell you of two people who are sure to be happy to-night,—our father and mother, for both you and I have made a success."

At the end of the run Mr. Buckstone recalled me to the Haymarket Theatre where I met such distinguished actors as Mr. Chippendale, Mr. Compton, Mr. Braid, and Mr. Rogers, who had all been engaged in my father's company in the Lincoln circuit. They welcomed me with open arms and christened me "The Daughter of the Regiment," by which nickname I was invariably called by them.

The play in which I opened was "Our American Cousin," in which it is not too much to say that Mr. E. A. Sothorn as Lord Dundreary had taken the world by storm and created a character which is one of the few fictional personages whose name lives in the vocabulary of our own time.

"Our American Cousin" was originally produced in New York and Dundreary was merely a small part in the play when it was given to Sothorn, who was then an inconspicuous member of the company. In order to make some-

thing of the part, Sothern adopted the idea of changing the "r's" into "w's," with the result that the actors at rehearsal were all laughing at the novel characterisation. One morning, the story goes, as he was about to make his entrance, a tack on the stage penetrated the thin sole of his shoe and he went on limping.

"Are you going to limp as well as lisp in the part?" asked an actress standing near.

"That's jutht what I am going to do," stuttered Sothern, and in that moment another eccentricity of the part was born.

So completely did the character dominate the scenes that the part became the most important in the play, with the result that while it was written up, the other parts were written down.

Like so many other actors who have made a success by laughter, Sothern hungered for the success of romance. It was this which made him attempt *Claude Melnotte*, in which play I repeated my performance of *Pauline*. Sothern's treatment of the part was, however, not very favourably received, as the audiences were evidently disappointed that there were no "Dundrearyisms" in the part. To satisfy this evident desire, he did, in the famous duel scene with Colonel Damas, allow his sense of humour to run away with him. In this he was hoist with his own petard and eventually he discarded the part.

His failure caused him to produce two new plays in quick succession—"A Wild Goose," an English version of "*Rosedale*," which had been acted with considerable success by Mr. J. W. Wallack in America, and "*A Wife Well Won*."

In this latter play I had the only woman's part and Mr. Sothern was always generous enough to speak in the highest terms of my performance.

The lack of success of these two plays necessitated the production of another piece. This was an adaptation by Dr. Westland Marston of M. Octave Feuillet's "*Roman d'un Jeune Homme Pauvre*," which Sothern himself had

already produced in America under the literally translated title, "The Romance of a Poor Young Man." The new version was called, "A Hero of Romance," but, once again, it did not succeed. Later in his career, Sothorn made an enormous success in "David Garrick," adapted from a French play by my brother Tom.

The title is really a misnomer, for none of the incidents occurred in Garrick's life. The original French play did have an actor for the hero, so when it was translated it was, in defiance of historical accuracy, given the name of the best-known English actor in the English theatre.

Since Sothorn's day many actors have played Garrick. The most notable was undoubtedly Sir Charles Wyndham, under whose management, I suppose, the play had its longest run since Sothorn played it.

As an actor, I had a great admiration for his command of gesture. The way in which he used a chair, turning it round, leaning on the back, putting his feet on one of the rungs and generally making it subservient to his mind, was very remarkable.

I met him once when he was acting in America and he said to me, "Next year I should like to revive two plays at the Criterion,—'The Lady of Lyons' and 'Still Waters Run Deep.' Will you come and play Pauline and Mrs. Sternhold with me?"

Deep down in my heart I said, "There is only one Claude Melnotte who can play the prince, and when he has on his prince's clothes he looks like one."

Neither suggestion came off, for Wyndham did not play Claude Melnotte and when he revived "Still Waters," another actress played Mrs. Sternhold.

As I have said before, I did play that part and other women much older than myself when I was young and wore heavy velvet dresses to conceal my figure so that my name should be kept in the programmes. The public at that time never guessed why, but I expect now they will guess the very first time.

Wyndham was another of the actors who made a great deal of money out of my brother Tom's plays, for he acted David Garrick for a long time. There was then no copyright in the play, so he did not have to pay any royalty for it.

Mention of Wyndham's name brings back to my memory a savage onslaught on him by Charles Brookfield, who was, for a short time, a member of our company at the St. James's.

Brookfield had a tongue like a razor. One day, at the Garrick Club, the conversation turned on the play which was then being acted at the Criterion Theatre and Wyndham remarked that a friend, commenting on his performance, had just told him that he "grew more like David Garrick every day."

"Yes," replied Brookfield, "more like him every day and less like him every night."

When he was writing David Garrick, my brother had me in his mind for the heroine, Ada Ingot. As I was not available at the time, the part was given to Miss Nellie Moore. She was a charming actress and a beautiful young woman with blue eyes and golden hair. Later, it was played by Miss Mary Moore (Lady Wyndham) whenever Charles Wyndham revived the play.

The termination of "A Hero of Romance" brought my association with Mr. Sothern to an end and my next part was Hypolita in Collie Cibber's "She Wou'd and She Wou'dn't," at the Haymarket, for the benefit of Mr. Buckstone, in which I played opposite to Mr. Kendal.

In this play the part Mr. Buckstone played had a scene in which he asked scores and scores of questions.

His memory was fading. Indeed, in the ordinary way he knew nothing of the part. When, however, he was dressed the words all came back; with the words, the action and the atmosphere, so that he was completely transformed.

He was an admirable actor and I shall never forget the

thrill I had when, at my first rehearsal of "The School for Scandal" he produced the original manuscript in Sheridan's writing for the guidance of the actors, saying, "We can't always hold such a copy to prompt from."

It will unquestionably surprise people to know that when Sir Peter Teazle, leaving Lady Sneerwell's house, says, "I leave my character behind me," that the famous line, "You had better take it with you, Sir Peter, or it will be damnably mauled," is not Sheridan at all, but a gag introduced by one of the actors of the time. It found such favour that it was incorporated ever afterwards.

Mr. Buckstone has an extraordinary capacity as a comedian and obtained effects which I have never seen equalled by anyone.

In a scene in one of our plays, "Rural Felicity," we had this dialogue :

I : "I'm going for a walk."

He : "May I go with you?"

I : "I never take a walk without an object."

He : "I'm your object."

The line is nothing in itself, but he spoke it in such a way that it was received with a roar of laughter which subsided only to break out afresh.

Again, in "Pygmalion" in which he played Chrysos, Galatea, struck by the fact that he is so unlike Pygmalion, says, "You are so round, so little and so fat," and asks him, "Are you a man?" to which he replies, "I have been told so." The way he delivered those five words was irresistible and the audience stopped the dialogue with its laughter.

He always congratulated me on the fact that I never let the laughter of the audience bring a smile to my face.

His nature had no tinge of jealousy in it.

On the first occasion on which the Haymarket company visited Glasgow after I had joined it, we opened with "The School of Scandal," in which my husband played Charles. When the curtain went up on the supper scene in which

Charles is first seen, he was given such a reception as I never heard before or since. So prolonged and deafening was the applause that Mr. Buckstone went out of his dressing-room to discover the cause, and I went out of mine.

Not content with the demonstration, when Charles had spoken his first line, the house again thundered its recognition of him.

While some managers might—would—have resented such a reception of a member of his company which was far in excess of any accorded to himself, Mr. Buckstone was delighted. When the curtain fell, he took my husband by both hands and said, “What a return, my dear boy, for all the little parts you played here years ago.”

But then Mr. Buckstone was neither an ordinary actor nor an ordinary manager. He was unusual in each capacity.

It was from him I first learnt the value of the orchestra which is gradually being done away with in the theatre to-day on account of its expense, although music can be a great help to the actor if it is introduced in the right way ; and, being of great use to the actor, it follows it must be of great help to the audience, for the greatest effect in the theatre is obtained by the collaboration of the actor and the audience.

In the preparation of the play, the actors collaborate with the author in order to produce the greatest effect of which his words are capable ; at the performance the actors collaborate with the audience to arrive at the same result and it is a greater result than is obtained when the audience is not there.

Mr. Buckstone never had the musicians in the theatre until the play was thoroughly rehearsed. When they were familiar with the incidental music, their efforts were joined to those of the actors in order to weld them together.

In this way, the play had its opportunity of making its effect on their minds with the same freshness as it did on the minds of the audience.

It was Mr. Buckstone's plan at the dress rehearsal to

go down to the footlights and say, "Gentlemen, what do you think of the piece."

If, during the performance of a comedy, he heard the orchestra laugh, he always said, "That's all right; the orchestra are seeing the play for the first time and they are laughing; the audience will laugh, too."

If, on the other hand, during a pathetic scene, one of the men craned forward to watch it, Mr. Buckstone would turn round and say with a satisfied chuckle, "That's all right; the pit will like that."

Occasionally, like the player Queen in Hamlet, the orchestra would protest too much. I recall that at the dress rehearsal of a poetical play, instead of waiting for Mr. Buckstone to put his usual question to the orchestra, W. S. Gilbert himself went down to the footlights and asked the conductor, "What do you think of it?"

He was Herr Meyer Lutz, a timid little foreigner who in after years was the conductor at the Gaiety under John Hollingshead.

He was in mortal dread of the author, about the vagaries of whose temper he had probably heard not a little, and wishing to be very complimentary replied, "It ees bettere zan Shak-espeare."

"Approbation from Sir Hubert Stanley is praise indeed."

The first original part I played as a member of the Haymarket company was Lilian Vavasour in "New Men and Old Acres."

It was made doubly interesting to me, for it proved my husband to be an excellent judge of plays.

One day, my husband spoke to Mr. Buckstone about the need of new plays for the theatre.

"Oh," said Mr. Buckstone, "people are always sending me plays; I have dozens of them in my room. I will send you half a dozen and you can read them if you like."

In the half-dozen manuscripts Mr. Buckstone sent my husband was "New Men and Old Acres." He was so enthusiastic about its possibilities that Mr. Buckstone

eventually agreed it should be produced for our benefit in Manchester. Its success was so pronounced that Buckstone decided to do it at the opening of the season at the Haymarket.

From that time, too, he always called my husband a connoisseur of plays as well as pictures, for even then he used to buy canvases which appealed to him.

Mr. Buckstone was rather happy-go-lucky in his attitude towards new plays. There were not nearly so many theatres in the West End of London as there are to-day, the competition was less and with his command of the chief authors, Mr. Buckstone could afford to be rather lax in his treatment of casual manuscripts.

One day, an author who had submitted a five-act play to him arrived at the theatre and demanded the return of the manuscript which he had previously written for and it had not been found.

He was shown in to Mr. Buckstone. "I'm sorry that your play cannot be found," he said genially, "but go up into my room. You will find a lot of three-act plays and a lot of two-act plays. Take one of each and make up for your lost five-acts."

Shortly after we were married, Sir Alexander Cockburn, the Lord Chief Justice, and Mr. Justice Quain paid us one of the greatest honours bestowed on us.

They were on circuit in Manchester and they asked my husband and me to play "The Love Chase." They each had a box and the Lord Mayor attended in state, while the floor of the house was occupied by the barristers who were on circuit. Among them were Mr. Asquith (the Earl of Oxford and Asquith), Sir John Holker, Mr. Underwood, Sir A. Rollitt, Mr. Aspinall, Mr. (later Sir) Frank Lockwood, who became a great friend of ours, and Mr. (afterwards Sir) Bargrave Deane, who acted as our counsel in the annulment case of my daughter's marriage.

A year after I arrived at the Haymarket, Mr. Buckstone sent for my father in order to make a new contract with

him for my services and then announced that I was to be accorded the distinction of having a dressing-room to myself and my name in large letters on the bills. Such a distinction meant something in those days.

It is different to-day when nearly every play is announced as being given with an "all-star cast."

Twinkle, twinkle little star,
How I wonder *where* you are !

Years later, when my husband and I were discussing the terms of our engagement for the Prince of Wales's Theatre, I said to the Bancrofts that I had been so long accustomed to a room to myself that I could not share a dressing-room with anyone else. Marie Wilton, who had many fine traits in her character, without a moment's hesitation, said, "I quite understand your feeling. My own dressing-room is a very large one and I will divide it into two by long screens." She did.

We used to knock on them when we wanted to see one another. Marie Wilton did more than share her dressing-room with me ; she furnished it in every way like her own and made it as comfortable as she could.

She was good to me for many years and she always spoke of my brother Tom as "the maker of her fortune." It was an added grief to our great sorrow when our association was broken up.

After the Haymarket season closed I returned to Hull, where I acted in "Passion Flowers," an adaptation of "On ne Badine pas avec l'Amour" by my brother Tom, after which, by Mr. Buckstone's permission, I was engaged by Mr. John Hollingshead to open his new Gaiety Theatre in "On the Cards," in which I was associated with Mr. Alfred Wigan, Mr. John Maclean and Miss Nellie Farren.

From that time until she went to Australia, some twenty years later, Miss Farren remained at the Gaiety Theatre. At her farewell performance she wrote me a letter asking me to appear on that occasion. Mrs. Oscar Beringer, the

mother of two accomplished actresses who distinguished themselves as children in an adaptation of "Little Lord Fauntleroy," wrote some verses which I recited of two girls in their teens who had appeared on the Gaiety stage, one of them, myself, had gone away, but the other had remained,—true to the theatre and its public for so long.

The reference to Miss Farren evoked such enthusiasm that the audience insisted, by its applause, on her returning again and again to the stage to bow her acknowledgments.

"On the Cards," was not a success and was succeeded by "Dreams," the only original play by my brother in which I acted.

The second act was a wonderful success but the latter part fell off, so that the play did not have the run I had hoped for it.

It did, however, give me the opportunity of learning by practical experience my brother's skill in directing the rehearsals.

Mr. Wigan was a remarkably fine actor with whom I had played the young girl's part in an adaptation of a French play in one act, "The First Night," at Bristol. In the course of this play in which he acted wonderfully an old Frenchman, we had to sing a duet from "The Huguenots." One night, when he had a bad cold and could not take the high notes, I took them for him. The play used to have a great vogue with amateurs who, I believe, still play it occasionally.

In "Dreams," the part of my lover was played by Mr. John Clayton who, in later life, made an enormous success in "All for Her," the first dramatisation, I think, of Charles Dickens's great novel, "A Tale of Two Cities," another dramatisation of which made the fame of Sir John Martin-Harvey.

Clayton used to speak as if he had plums in his mouth, and addressing me in the play always said, "Clawa, to-morrowow."

In the last act he had to fight a duel and in order that

he might return to the stage looking interestingly pale, his dresser used to stand in the wings with a powder box and puff.

Mr. Wigan was a great practical joker, as were many men of his time, and one night he substituted soot for the powder.

In the hurry of the moment, Clayton "powdered" his face without looking in his hand-mirror. The result was that he returned to the stage a blackamoor, and the audience roared with laughter, to his great discomfiture, but the delight of Mr. Wigan.

Later, Clayton was a member of the Bancroft company at the Prince of Wales's when my husband and I played in "Diplomacy," and later still, when we went to the Court and the St. James's he was still associated with us.

My husband and he always dressed in the same room during the run of "Diplomacy." On the first night, they were both so nervous that while they were dressing, one of them filled his pipe and put it on the mantelpiece, where-upon the other, thinking it was his, picked it up, lighted it and smoked it.

The friendship between Mr. Clayton and my husband and me caused him to come to us when the tragedy of his life overtook him. He had married in our profession, for the father and mother of his wife were both actors. She, however, could never realise that an actor and actress making love on the stage is merely a matter of business and it does not necessarily represent their real feelings, so she left him.

As soon as he discovered what had happened,—it was so late at night that my husband and I had had our supper and gone to bed,—he came straight to our house and knocked us up. We went down in our dressing-gowns and let him in.

He was in a terrible state of excitement and after telling us what had happened he turned to me and said, "Madge, find her for me. You are the only woman in the world who can do it. Find her."

I found her.

It took me a whole week to do it, but I induced her to return home.

Strange as it may seem, this simple act of serving a friend in sore distress instead of evoking sympathy was the cause of the vials of wrath being poured upon my head.

Everywhere I was ridiculed and vituperated. "Are you going to look after our morals?" people on the one side asked, while others who had been parted from their lawful spouses enquired whether I was going to fetch back their erring husbands or wives.

It always seems to me another proof of Iago's quick-witted perception, "There is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so."

When the Haymarket Theatre under Mr. Buckstone closed its doors, my husband and I felt that, young as we were, we ought to start on our own account as we were offered a starring engagement by Mr. James Rogers, the lessee and manager of the Prince of Wales's, Birmingham.

Mr. Rogers, in his youth, had been a member of my father's company and had been associated with Mr. Walter Montgomery at the Haymarket when I made my debut as Ophelia, so that he knew me very well.

Our engagement was for six nights and the plays in which we appeared were "Romeo and Juliet," "The Lady of Lyons," "The Hunchback," "As You Like It," and "East Lynne," which last, although more than sixty years old, has not yet lost its power of attraction. In addition, we played Mr. Theyre Smith's "Uncle's Will," which we had already acted over three hundred times at the Haymarket and we produced a new comedietta, "Weeds," by Mr. T. Edgar Pemberton.

I wonder what the actors of to-day who consider that playing from eight-thirty to eleven in a three-act comedy is hard work would think when they learn that on the Saturday evening we played "The Hunchback" and "The Lady of Lyons,"—ten acts in two exacting plays.

Even at that time my husband was very particular about

the decoration of the stage and complained to Mr. Rogers about the shabbiness of the upholstery. Mr. Rogers, who had played Mercutio in "Romeo and Juliet," promised that the fault should be remedied.

It was, for the furniture the next night was covered with silk, satin and velvet. After the curtain had fallen my husband thanked Mr. Rogers for what he had done, and the old actor replied, "Yes, I've had my Mercutio costume cut up to help you make your effects."

Our summer tours continued for several years and established our reputations in the provinces.

On one occasion when we were going to Hull, I received a letter from Mr. Henry Compton in which he asked me to allow his daughter, who was a member of the Stock Company, to play all the next parts to me.

Our repertoire was "The Lady of Lyons," "The Hunchback," and "Masks and Faces," in the last of which Mabel Vane was the part Miss Compton would act.

At the rehearsal of the great scene in the second act, when Mabel Vane comes to Triplet's home to look at the portrait he has painted of Peg Woffington, I noticed she constantly turned her gaze to the wings. After she had done this two or three times I also looked in that direction and saw a young man standing there. As they looked at one another they smiled.

After the rehearsal I said, "You know that young man standing in the wings?"

"Yes," Miss Compton replied, "he's my husband."

"Does your father know you are married?"

"No," she replied.

Later, he was brought up to me and introduced and he told me he called himself Claude Carton.

I asked him the question I had asked his young wife, "Does your father know of your marriage?" and I got the same reply.

He told me they wanted to speak to me and they asked if I would tell their respective fathers.

At the end of the week, when I returned to London, I asked for an interview with his brother and told him and his sister what had happened.

They were both delightfully sympathetic and charming and said they would do everything for the young people and brought them to London.

They took me to Gower Street where a sitting-room and bedroom had been engaged and a cheque for the rent was lying in the drawer of the writing-table, while upstairs there was a complete baby's layette in the drawers, a very necessary adjunct to their menage.

It was for me the fairy tale ending of their story.

Mr. Carton subsequently acted with Irving at the Lyceum at the same time that Arthur Pinero was there, and, like him, left the stage in order to devote himself to writing plays, in the later of which the leading part was always written for and acted by his wife.

So much of my life has had to be lived under the dominion of the sterner planets that there were times when my ebullient sense of fun, so long and so sternly repressed by Circumstance, had to break forth, in protest as it were.

One of these outbreaks occurred during a visit to Rochdale for three nights.

It was a real Lancashire town and the women went, typically, about the streets with shawls on their heads. Not one of them would have been seen in one of those crochet caps which are so much the mode at present.

For our visit the manager of the theatre opened a new box office to allow the early comers to the unreserved parts of the house to buy seats at an increased price.

Born in Lincolnshire, as I had been, I possessed and still possess a certain command of the dialect.

I said to my maid Odham, "Odie, I'm going to have a lark to-night." She remonstrated, but to no purpose.

Off I went to the box office and in my broadest Yorkshire asked, "What is the price of seats to-night?"

The man in the box office told me. "What's the price raised for," I asked. "Who's coomin'?"

"Mr. and Mrs. Kendal," replied the man.

"Ay," I replied. "She's a friend o' mine and Ah've always got a seat for a shillun and Ah'm not going to pay any more."

By this time several people had lined up behind me and were anxious to buy their tickets. "Go away," said the man in the box office. "I've told you the price; if you want a ticket you must pay it."

"No," I retorted. "I shan't go away. Ah've coom here to get me seat and you've got to attend to me as well as to the other folk."

There were murmurs of resentment from the crowd at my delaying it, so Odie, growing anxious, plucked me by the arm and as I had carried my joke far enough for that evening I went away with her.

Before the curtain went up my husband came to me and asked, "Has anybody been following you saying she was a friend of yours, for the man at the box office was very much put out by her conduct. She insisted on his selling her a seat."

"Well, he's there for the purpose of selling seats, isn't he?" I asked.

The following evening I returned to the attack. I arrived at the early doors and planked down ninepence, saying, "Here's ninepence, you can let me have a seat for that to-night. Prices always coom down after t'first night."

The man in the box office looked at me with a stern glint in his eyes as he said, "Madam, I recognise you now; you ought to be ashamed of yourself, coming here and pretending to be a woman of the people."

I was perfectly delighted at his reprimand and exclaimed as I went away, "I'm so sorry I've been found out."

"Madam," said Odham, as she drew me away, "I knew you would be found out and the master will be very angry when he hears of it."

“Never mind the master, Odie, I must have some fun sometimes,—especially at Rochdale.”

“East Lynne” was such a favourite at this time, that it remained in our repertoire for several tours, but I left off playing it after an incident in Yorkshire.

The great situation in the play is one in which the heroine, disguising herself, after divorce obtains a situation as governess and nurses her own child who is dying. It is a heartrending scene and the curtain goes down on the sobbing woman crying, “Dead! And never called me mother.”

So wrought up was one woman in the audience that she stood up, and, with the tears rolling down her face, cried, “No more! No more!”

Not very long before this, my own first baby had died and while playing the scene I was so affected that I broke down. The memory of my own grief was so poignant that I never attempted to play the part after that night.

On one other occasion my own private grief came between me and the public.

This was during the run of “Diplomacy,” at the Prince of Wales’s Theatre. The evening of the day on which my dear mother died I had to act.

The first words I had to speak on the stage were, “Mother, are you there?”

Words cannot tell what I suffered before I went on the stage and while I was on it, for the emotion of the scene did not allow me to permit tears to come to my relief as it did in “East Lynne.”

It is only those women who have really worshipped their mother and had that worship returned who can picture to themselves how great must be the strain on an actress’s emotion to avoid letting her private griefs interfere with the character she is representing.

That, however, is what actors have to go through very often.

I cannot help repeating that my mother was a wonderful woman. My brother Tom was born when she was eighteen



MY MOTHER

and I when she was forty-eight. In those thirty years she had had twenty-two children.

My father died on December 4th, 1872. Shortly after, my mother's health began to fail.

When the anniversary was approaching, two years later, my sisters and I, noting how weak she had grown, determined to prevent her seeing the newspaper so that when the anniversary really came she would not realise the date in her enfeebled state.

On the morning of December 4th however, when we went into her room she turned to us and said, "You have been very kind, all of you, in trying to spare me, but I know to-day's the anniversary of your father's death."

A few hours later she passed away. When she lay dead, we cut off a long strand of her beautiful brown hair that each of us might keep for the rest of our lives.

I cannot write more of her.

Shall I grow lovely growing old
As many rare things do.
Laces and ivories and gold,
And lace need not be new.
Old trees a perfume have,
Old streets a glamour hold ;
Why should not I as well as they
Grow lovely growing old.

Those lines might have been written of her, for in all things she was lovely.

My mother, my father and my two elder sisters sleep in Highgate cemetery.

In death they are not divided.

A mother's devotion is so profound that we cannot comprehend it when we are young. What can a child know of all the care and affection its mother bestows on it. It can only recognise these things later in life.

How many young people do realise that, even then.

All my mother did for me I tried to emulate in after life when I became a mother. Alas, I have failed ignominiously !

CHAPTER VII

THE COURT AND PRINCE OF WALES'S THEATRES

AT the end of 1874 or the beginning of 1875 my husband came home and told me that he had been approached at the Garrick Club by Mr. John Hare, a fellow-member, with a view to his becoming a silent partner for the remainder of the lease of the Court Theatre,—nearly two years, as Mr. Hare did not care to undertake the responsibility of the theatre alone.

In talking it over, my husband said, "Your brother Tom believed in him and brought him to London."

The proposal was that my husband and Mr. Hare should each put up two thousand pounds so that the enterprise was started with a capital of four thousand pounds, our own money, not the money of a syndicate, or of friends.

Having inherited something of my mother's apprehensiveness, I said to my husband, "Two thousand pounds is all we have in the world; and how we've deprived ourselves to save it. Don't part with it yet. Tell Mr. Hare you'll send it later."

"My dear," replied my husband, "whatever else you may be, you are not a good business woman. I'm afraid Mr. Hare will not agree to that. Not only must I pay this money into our joint account at once, but as a business man I have to see that my partner also does the same."

The arrangement was that we should each draw twenty-five pounds a week as a salary and that all three of us should act in every play no matter what the part was. The arrangement was not always carried out. Indeed it was

broken almost immediately by Mr. Hare who did not act in the third play we produced at the Court, and at the St. James's he did not act during the whole nine months' run of "Impulse," and his understudy, Mr. William Mackintosh, appeared for him soon after the production of "The Squire" and "Clancarty."

At the Court during our season we produced four plays : "Lady Flora," "A Nine Days' Wonder," "Broken Hearts," and "A Scrap of Paper."

"Lady Flora" was not a success, but I recall that my husband and I played a scene over a sundial and he spoke a verse in French.

Our second play was "A Nine Days' Wonder," by Mr. Hamilton Aidé. He was a well-known man about town who had literary and musical ambitions, and was a very pleasant and clever person. He had been in the Guards and always looked a dapper little guardsman.

He left the Army in order to take care of his mother. He was a devoted son. He used to give quite delightful little parties on Friday, a fact which inspired Lady Tree, who was always renowned among her friends for her playful wit, to perpetrate the following rhyme in a form invented, I think, by Edwin Lear, but since employed for other purposes.

The verses ran :

Do you know Mr. Hamilton Aidé
He is always so neat and so tidy.
He gives little teas
His friends for to please
And is always at home on a Friday.

In "A Nine Days' Wonder," Mr. Hare, as he then was, played one of the few young men's parts he acted during his career. It was that of my lover and I think he liked and even prided himself on the fact that he could and did play a juvenile part, which he did excellently.

At the end of the first act we had a love scene over the piano, after I had sung a song written and composed by

Mr. Aidé "Let Me Dream of Happy Days Gone By." I remember it vividly, for to every word he had given a note.

As I write, I can recall Mr. Hare's voice, as in that scene he asked, "Do you remember when you were seventeen and I was twenty-four, we first met?"

The name of my part was Amabel.

From the time I played it, he never called me or wrote to me, if he ever did have occasion to write to me, by any other name than, "My dear Amabel."

I don't remember how long the piece ran, for it was not one of our successes, but at the end of the season Mr. Hare determined to take it on his own tour, while my husband and I went off on ours.

I persuaded him to engage Miss Cleveland for Amabel. She could sing and play the piano very well and I thought she was very suited to the part. The tour started, but after two nights Mr. Hare broke the engagement and finished the tour.

I never fathomed why he did not like Miss Cleveland, for she was a dark, handsome woman and an admirable artist.

It was a peculiar characteristic of Mr. Hare's that whenever W. S. Gilbert was in front he always acted his best, with the result that he was more effective than at any other time.

One night I asked him if he could not engage Gilbert to sit in front every night! How angry he got when I explained why!

"A Nine Days' Wonder" was followed by "Broken Hearts," about which I have written elsewhere. That, in its turn, was succeeded by "A Scrap of Paper," an adaptation by Palgrave Simpson of Sardou's "Les Pattes de Mouche."

As soon as Mr. Charles Mathews heard we were going to produce it, he wrote to my husband and gave him a famous gag in the scene in which Mrs. Gaston Murray called on him. When she knocked at the door she asked, "Can I



W. H. KENDAL IN HIS BEARSKIN ("A SCRAP OF PAPER")

come in," and he replied, "Yes, if you don't mind ; I'm in my bear-skin."

"I have never known this line to fail," wrote Mr. Mathews, "and I know what you will make of it."

It never did fail. We used to stand on the stage for two minutes by the clock while the audience laughed. The bear-skin coat which my husband wore reached from his head to his heels. It was hired from a fur merchant named Nicholas in Oxford Street. It was hired again when we revived the play at the St. James's and when we were going to America my husband called at the shop to ask if he could get it again and was told that nobody else had ever used it since he wore it. It was hired, and we kept it on hire for the five tours in America. On returning home my husband took it back himself and paid the last fee for it.

When my husband received the bill he said, "I wonder how many times over we've paid for that coat?"

Shortly after, a large parcel arrived at our house. On opening it we found the fur coat with a card asking my husband to accept it. After my husband's death I had the coat made into a rug and I still use it in my car.

In the first production of the play my husband used to make his appearance with a live monkey on his shoulder, and later in "The Falcon" he used a live bird.

I don't think either monkeys or falcons care for the theatre. They have gone over to the films, following the actors and actresses. Alas !

At the end of the first season at the Court, when the bills were paid and the books were finally made up, the two partners went together to Wellby's shop, opposite the Garrick Club, and each bought his wife a small diamond necklace out of the profits.

To show them off, Mrs. Hare and I had black velvet dresses made, cut high at the back, square in front and sleeves to the elbows. When we had them on with our diamond necklaces on our necks, our gloves on and a clean

handkerchief in our hands, I wish I could tell you how handsome Mrs. Hare was.

At that time I christened her "The Ornament for the Firestove."

Who, I wonder, of the modern generation, knows anything about ornaments for the firestove which, made of green, white and pink waxed paper, were used in the summer to fill the grate?

The last Christmas Sir Squire Bancroft was alive he spent with his son, Mr. George Bancroft, and his wife. On his return, he came to see me and said, "I have been to Westgate to spend the holiday with the family and my dear grandchildren. Lady Hare was there. She is as beautiful as ever. I gazed at her in astonishment. I recall the time when we were all in love with her, as young men. She still retains her beauty in an astonishing way."

After some years, my little necklace was augmented to three rows and I presented it on her wedding day to that Mary who, grown to womanhood, used as a child to call me "Darling Granny Grimmie."

I always think it is best to give things away when one is alive. Waiting for dead men's shoes never appealed to me in the slightest.

At the end of every season my husband invested the bulk of our share of the profits, but in some mysterious way there was always a hundred or two hundred pounds left over.

My husband then became a schoolboy and apportioned half of the sum to me. With it he always bought me a ring or a brooch. His own share went to buy a picture. That was his chief delight. I was always taken to the picture galleries in Bond Street and Ryder street and on being shown a certain canvas was asked, "What do you think of that?" In this way I knew the picture he was going to buy long before it was purchased. I also knew where he planned it should hang in our home.

His flair for pictures was shown, in particular, by his

purchase of the first picture exhibited at the Liverpool Art Club by Mr. Anning Bell, R.A. It still hangs on the wall by my writing-table. My husband also bought Mr. Byam Shaw's "Queen of Spades," undoubtedly the finest piece of work that prematurely cut-off artist ever produced.

When we lived at 12, Portland Place, we were immediately opposite the house of Sir William Quiller Orchardson, R.A., whom we often visited. He used to allow my husband to watch him paint. Sir William's technique was extraordinary and he used to say that, although he had the reputation for painting faster than his brother artists, he really painted very slowly. The reason for his seeming rapidity was that he never put his brush on the canvas until he was certain that he would not have to paint out what he had painted in.

On one occasion, Sir William told my husband that he intended to ask the Chantrey Bequest the sum of one thousand four hundred pounds for the picture on his easel.

"If I had one thousand four hundred pounds to spare, no Chantrey Bequest should have that picture. It should be in my home where I could feast my eyes on it," replied my husband.

Another time he fell in love with a storm-swept landscape by Mr. Raphael Jones. Again the Chantrey Bequest wanted it. Subsequently, my husband's disappointment was changed to delight when he got a telegram from Lord Leighton saying he could have Raphael Jones's landscape as the Chantrey Bequest had determined to buy something else.

That picture hangs in my dining-room.

What more appropriate place than in the society of his brother artists can I find to speak of my old friend, Sir David Murray, R.A., who, more than anyone else I know, seems to have discovered the secret of perpetual youth. His pictures are as fresh and glowing to-day as they were when his tale of years was less than half what it is.

The picture of his which I love best is a scene in a French

province. It is the spring of the year. The canvas is a mass of may-trees in bloom. In the foreground is a great wayside cross with the figure of our Saviour hanging on it and the Crown of Thorns on his head. A peasant woman is kneeling before the Crucifix. A reverential awe pervades the whole scene.

As soon as I moved from the picture, I went to the secretary and asked the price. On being told, I sighed.

Only one other picture has ever appealed to me as this one does,—Bouguereau's "Mater Afflicta."

During our term at the Court, Mrs. Gaston Murray, who was the oldest and a distinguished member of the company, had the idea of having tea in the theatre one day every week after rehearsal. The invitation was sent in the following verse :

Dear jovial friends I thank you one and all
For thus responding to our social call.
Our room though small, when filled with tall and short
Becomes a palace or a "royal court."
You're welcome friends and may we often see
Your happy faces at our cup of tea.

to which I replied with this doggerel :

Dear lady, this wee "scrap of paper " is bright
With your kindness, and I with the greatest delight
Can only make answer, your "court"-ly invite
Goes straight to my heart ; I'll be with you to-night !
Good company, tea, talk, unflavoured with scandal
Should live.

Yours truly, Madge Robertson Kendal.

Towards the end of the season, Mrs. Murray thought it would be nice to give Mr. Hare a handsome present on his birthday and a subscription, headed by my husband, was got up for the purpose.

At rehearsal on the day Mr. Hare flew into a terrible rage and everybody was in such a state of nervous excitement that Mrs. Murray came to me and said, "We certainly can never make the presentation this morning."

I, however, knew Mr. Hare better than she did and I

said, "If you will wait two minutes his temper will be gone and he won't even know that he's even been angry, and we can proceed as we intended."

When the sky looked clearer, Mrs. Murray, so nervous that she nearly dropped the present she was holding, advanced and said, "Mr. Hare, can I speak to you?"

"Certainly not," he flared out. "The rehearsal's been very bad and we've got to go through it all again."

"But it's your birthday, Mr. Hare," Mrs. Murray managed to say, "and the members of the company who love you so much wish to present you with this little remembrance of the day."

Mr. Hare seemed transformed. He changed colour, took off his hat and tears filled his eyes. "How sweet of you all to remember my birthday. What can I say to you? I'll never be in a temper again."

A loud guffaw from me greeted the statement, but everybody was delighted and shook hands with everybody else.

We had many delightful little tea-parties at the Court after that during long rehearsals, and when at tea Mr. Hare was always a gallant little man and made things most cheery.

While "A Scrap of Paper" was running, we received an offer from the Bancrofts to appear in "The Merchant of Venice," of which they made a notable revival in the spring of 1876.

I had known Bancroft since I was a child of eleven and at that time he was called Sydney, not Squire, which he adopted later.

His wife had also been a member of the Bristol company a little while before my parents joined it.

They wanted my husband to play Bassanio and they offered me Portia.

My husband did not see his way to play Bassanio, so the proposal fell through and Ellen Terry, who had been away from the stage for some time, was engaged for Portia while Mr. Charles Coghlan played Shylock.

The production was not a success, for it ran for only thirty-six performances and was followed by a revival of "Money" in which Ellen played Clara Douglas and Coghlan, Alfred Evelyn.

Later in the year the Bancrofts renewed their offer for us to join them in the production of "Peril," an adaptation of Sardou's "Nos Intimes," which had a long run.

Forty years later, when Lady Bancroft had been dead for some time and two years before the end of his own life, Sir Squire Bancroft brought back a vivid recollection of it.

In spite of the severance of our relations through a domestic tragedy, he and I always remained constant to our old regard for each other.

One day he arrived at my house in Portland Place with a large brown paper parcel under his arm.

"Are you going to the wash, Bogey?" I asked, that being the name by which his friends called him.

"No, Madge," he said in his slow, methodical manner, "I'm not going to the wash, but this belongs to you."

On opening the parcel I found a beautiful piece of brocade with a tassel on each end and a ring in the middle. It was an old-fashioned work-bag.

"This was your work-bag in 'Peril,'" he said. "You used it forty years ago. I think the date is correct."

"Oh, Bogey," I replied. "You don't mean to say you collected all the hand properties that people used in the play forty years ago."

"No, not all of them," he said with a strange tone in his voice, "but I collected *this*."

I had it made into a cushion and it occupies a place on the sofa in the drawing-room of my cottage in the country.

When we were both young, I used to tease him about a hat he wore, the brim of which was very turned up.

He then had a small silver hat specially made like it and gave it to me. I always kept matches in it.

One day, when he came to lunch, he saw it and eyed it closely.

"I see you are looking at your hat, Bogey ; it has been on my table for nearly thirty years."

He picked it up and looked at the date, above which he had had engraved, "From B." "And you've had it on your table ever since I gave it to you?" he asked.

"I have," I answered. "Anything wrong about it?"

He shook his head. "No, nothing wrong about *you*."

He had a curious sense of humour which invariably evoked my own.

While my husband and I were at the Prince of Wales's we lived in a small house in Taviton Street, but with the increase in our family we moved to Harley Street.

Shortly after we were installed, I met Bancroft. He stuck his eyeglass in his eye and cocked his hat a little more than usual on one side as he said, "I hear you've moved to Harley Street. Is it at the end by Cavendish Square where ladies and gentlemen reside or at the Marylebone Road end?"

"The Marylebone Road, Bogey," I replied. "Just fit for rogues and vagabonds."

To appreciate the humour, let me add that he was living in Cavendish Square.

Our changes of residence corresponded curiously with those of Sir George Lewis, the first baronet, the famous solicitor. In his young days he also lived in Taviton Street, opposite our home.

After a time he began to prosper and moved to Harley Street. A few years passed and the famous firm of Lewis & Lewis prospering still more, Sir George, still Mr. Lewis, moved to Portland Place.

Thanks to the American public as well as the English public,—to whom for ever thanks,—my husband and I, prospering still more, also moved from Harley Street to Portland Place.

One day I met Mr. Lewis and he addressed me thus :

"Mrs. Kendal, you ought to be ashamed of yourself following me, in the way you do ;—from Taviton Street

to Harley Street and from Harley Street to Portland Place. Luckily for me, my wife has always been with me."

"Yes," I replied, "and luckily for me, my husband has always been with me."

While "Peril" was running, Mr. Bancroft invited my husband and Mr. Clayton to accompany him to Paris to see Sardou's play "Dora," at the Vaudeville Theatre in that city.

They left on a Sunday morning, intending to see the play that night and return on Monday in time for the performance. As she would otherwise have been alone, Mrs. Bancroft asked if she might come and spend the Sunday with me.

Naturally, I said yes. She was very cheerful and happy all day, but in the early evening after I had bathed my children myself, much to her amusement, and when they had gone to bed and our old mongrel dog had given his last growl and crawled under my daughter Margaret's cot, we went downstairs to dinner.

Suddenly Mrs. Bancroft became quite serious and said, "What do you think the men are doing now?"

"I don't know," I replied, "Dining, I suppose, or, having dined, are ready to go to the theatre to see 'Dora.'"

It was then I discovered that this vivacious little lady was in love with her husband, as he was with her, for he confessed that, years before he met her to join her company, he had fallen in love with her at first sight.

She was very much astonished at my not having any jealousy in my composition. I never have had. My parents, my husband, my children, all born within two years of one another, were my world and jealousy never entered my heart.

The only form of jealousy of which I know anything is maternal jealousy.

Try to imagine a mother's feelings when a man, rather short of stature, with no features and little mentality, comes to ask for her daughter's hand.

The only adequate reply, it seems to me, can be made

in the words of Queen Constance in the third act of "King John" :

Thou wear a lion's hide ! Doff it for shame
And hang a calf's skin on those recreant limbs.

All mothers go through this emotion. They sit for hours dreaming of a man six foot high, with a form like Hercules, a head full of brains, "the poets" at his finger-tips and having reached a position which assures him a sufficient income before he comes asking for your daughter. Or, on the other hand, they dream of a woman, clever, cheerful, full of aptitude and adaptability, who calls upon them to give up the baby boy they have worshipped and who, they imagine, would marry at least a woman of his own class.

What does a mother get for all she has done in the past for her children? No more vivid answer could be given than that given me by an old Yorkshire woman about her son, "Aye, Mrs. Grimston, he made my stomach ache before I seed him ; he made my arms ache carryin' him as a baby ; he made my head ache makin' a noise with the other children when he was growin' up : he made my heart ache as a man when he did growed up, for in three-quarters of an hour a woman comed along and wiped me off the face of the earth."

"You are talking philosophy," I said.

"I know nothin' about philosophy, I only know my heart is broken."

That is what mothers go through : added to which is the dark glimpse of the divorce courts lying at one side to gnaw at your breast and render you sleepless.

Still, in time, philosophy does come to one's aid and one learns how to endure. I distinctly remember my husband saying to me, towards the end of his life, "*You chose me, I chose you, and we are again, as we were when we were young, alone.*"

I wonder if some mothers attribute their unhappiness to outsiders. *I do.*

The next play was "London Assurance," preceded by "The Vicarage." In it Mrs. Bancroft, who was associated with Arthur Cecil and my husband, gave a beautiful performance.

"London Assurance" was followed by the production of "Diplomacy." The adaptation was entrusted to two well-known writers, Mr. Clement Scott and Mr. B. C. Stephenson, who hid their identities under the pseudonyms of Saville Rowe and Bolton Rowe.

It made an instant and enormous success and was notable for the fact that the great scene in the play was acted only by three men, Bancroft, John Clayton and Arthur Cecil.

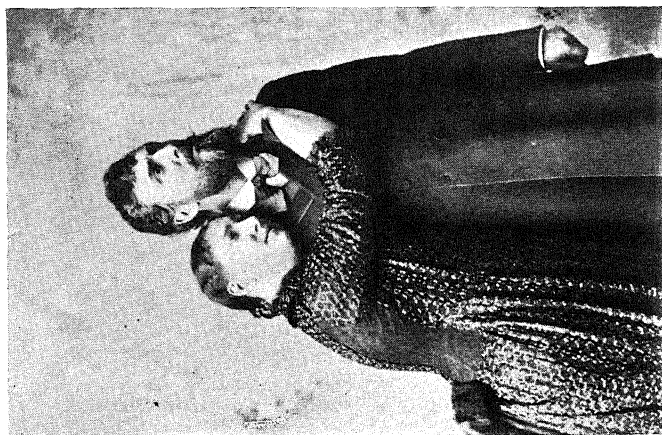
No play of that time has been revived so frequently and with such consistent success.

Some of the younger writers about the theatre call it machine-made and maintain that it lacks verisimilitude; that is, in my opinion, due merely to the fact that there is not sufficient momentum in the acting, not sufficient vitality in the actors to carry the audience along and so blind them to everything but the interest of the moment.

At the Garrick Theatre Sir John Hare revived it with Lady Bancroft playing not the Countess Zicka, which she originally acted, but Lady Henry Fairfax, which was written up for her and in which she made so great a success that it drew all London. At that time Sir John Hare had not been very successful in his productions and a witty actor referred cunningly to Lady Bancroft as the "Hare Restorer,"—a phrase which ran through more than theatrical London.

During the run of "Diplomacy," Lord Beaconsfield, then, of course, Mr. Benjamin Disraeli, came to see the play and writing about my acting to Lady Bradford said he had been to see

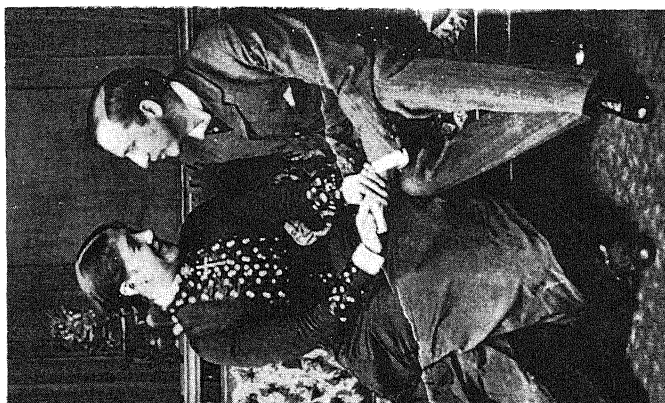
an adaptation from the French "Nos Intimes"—not over-moral but cleverly acted in the chief part—a woman whom, I doubt not, you, an habituee of the drama, know very well, but quite new to me. Now she is married, but she was a sister of Robertson, the playwright. She had evidently studied in the French school.



[Barraud.

MR. AND MRS. KENDAL IN
"THE IRONMASTER "

See page 224



[Windoe & Grove.

MR. AND MRS. KENDAL IN
"DIPLOMACY"—ORIGINAL
PRODUCTION AT PRINCE OF
WALES'S THEATRE

It only shows how the best intelligences can be deceived, for I never was trained in France, though I could have been.

When I was a girl in my teens, one of the famous French actors, a professor at the Paris Conservatoire, saw me on the stage in Bristol.

He went to my father and said, as my father told me, "Will you let me have your daughter for a year at the Conservatoire and I will make her a great actress?"

Without a moment's hesitation, however, my father spoke an emphatic no, as he preferred to keep me by his side and train me himself.

Mr. Disraeli was the one Prime Minister of my time whom I never had the opportunity of meeting. I did, however, know Mr. Gladstone and I have known all the Premiers from his time to the present day.

I once persuaded Mr. Gladstone to come to a reading of Ibsen's "An Enemy of the People," by Mrs. Le Moynes, one afternoon at the St. James's Theatre. She was a distinguished American, the wife of a popular actor, and I added to my entreaty the fact that Mr. Gladstone, by honouring an American actress, would give great pleasure to the United States. Of course, Mrs. Le Moynes was very delighted to know that the Prime Minister of England would be in her audience.

After the reading was over, I went to Mr. Gladstone's box and found that, during that warm summer afternoon, the great man had enjoyed a delightful nap.

What did that matter! When he was awake and speaking to you, you felt you were the only person living in the world, so completely did he appear to be absorbed in his conversation with you; and his charm of manner was phenomenal.

If ten women were surrounding the handsomest man of to-day and Mr. Gladstone entered the room, it would have been better for that young man if he had never been born. There was a latent power combined with an extraordinary

gift of oratory about Mr. Gladstone, all of which one felt but could not account for.

When I returned from America he asked me, one day, how I liked the country.

I asked him why he didn't go there. "How they would receive you!" I exclaimed. "We should hear the cheers across the Atlantic."

The night he invited Sir Frank Lockwood to dine with him, I was at the latter's house. His wife and I teased Frank, who was a staunch Conservative, and bade him put on everything he had of the best to meet the great man.

When I saw him afterwards, he had crossed the floor!

Lord Salisbury, like all his family, was the most modest of men. He used to lunch often at the Junior Carlton Club where the younger members of the Conservative party always saluted him by taking their hats off, as a mark of their respect.

Marcus Stone, the famous artist, noticing that my husband also took off his hat when the Prime Minister passed, asked him, "Why do all you fellows take off your hats to Lord Salisbury? You don't take them off to me."

"My dear Marcus," replied my husband, "do you want to know?"

"Yes, I do."

"Because, my dear fellow, you are not Lord Salisbury."

Of Mr. Bonar Law I only want to say one thing, "he should have died hereafter." Those words of Shakespeare sum up my impression of a really great man.

I also had the pleasure of knowing Lord Oxford and Asquith, who, as I have related, was a barrister on circuit when he attended our performance at Manchester.

My meeting with Mr. Ramsay MacDonald grew out of a visit to Lossiemouth to some friends. On my way to the post office one morning I met a married woman, an old friend of my eldest daughter. "What are you doing here?" I asked.

"I live here," she replied.

Across the way was a little house and I asked whose it was. When I was told it was Mr. MacDonald's I said, "Ask him to tea and let me meet him."

I could not help being struck with his simplicity and sincerity, although at that time he had not reached the exalted position he now enjoys.

The next morning my friends asked us to a picnic party of young people to which he was going. I, however, declined and stopped to look at the waves which were running very high. Suddenly, as we stood on the shore, we heard a scream, as a tidal wave broke on the beach. My friend threw off her hat and coat, and, heedless of the danger, plunged into the raging water and brought back a girl of about fifteen. She was Mr. MacDonald's daughter, Sheila, who had been overcome by the force of the wave. The child was insensible but recovered when artificial respiration was applied.

How I adore courage ! That day I witnessed it in my friend.

At the marriage of this brave woman's son, I again met Mr. MacDonald ; he proposed the health of the bride and bridegroom. It was a most cheerful, simple, encouraging speech, not too long, and we all enjoyed ourselves "woundily" as Dr. Johnson says.

One always feels a foot taller when one has walked and talked with a Prime Minister. Those are the days when I don't wear my bonnet because my head is too large. I walk on air and give myself some graces, such as snubbing people who had snubbed me in my youth and cutting the pressmen *dead*.

Among the distinguished people who came to see "Diplomacy" at the Prince of Wales's were George Eliot and George Henry Lewes.

I had met her years before when I first came to London as a girl, for my father who knew everybody took me one Sunday afternoon to see her. Although her books, I understand, are not now as popular as they used to be in

her lifetime, she was regarded as one of the triumvirate of novelists of the Victorian era, sharing her place in the world of letters with Dickens and Thackeray.

I had already read *The Mill on the Floss*, and I was so excited at the idea of meeting this wonderful woman that I said, "Father, when we get into the drawing-room, let us sit close to her ; sparks may come out of her and one may fall on me."

"My dear child," replied my father, "we will sit as close to her as we can, but whether you are sharp enough to catch a spark from her remains to be seen."

As everyone knows, she was a plain woman, but when her face was animated she was no longer plain. She had the most lovely speaking voice and it was a joy to listen to her.

I always expected diamonds and pearls of thought to fall from her mouth like the girl in the fairy story, but to my surprise the thing this wonderful woman was most interested in when she came into my dressing-room at the theatre was my clothes. She asked me who made the blue dressing-jacket I was wearing !

By then, my father had told me the remarkable story of George Eliot's independence of thought and action which resulted in her life with Mr. Lewes.

She had been in the habit of going every day to see Mrs. Lewes and the children. One day, when she arrived, she found, to her astonishment, that Mrs. Lewes was not there.

Undeterred by the fact and conscious of her own rectitude she continued going every day to do whatever she could for the children. One day, some busybody told her she was committing a grave indiscretion and that she was laying herself open to too much gossip of an undesirable character, for people were impugning her character by associating her name with that of Mr. Lewes.

"If that is the case, we will make those reports true," she said, or words to that effect.

It was in that way, according to my father's story, that their association began.

Years later, Mr. W. G. Wills dramatised *Adam Bede* and a report was published in some of the papers that the Hare and Kendal management had bought it and intended to produce it at the St. James's.

George Eliot sent for me and said, "*Adam Bede* is the one book I have written that I wish never to be dramatised."

"Your word is law," I replied, "and your play will not be produced in our theatre."

I returned to the St. James's and told the two managers what had happened. They were very disappointed, but they returned the manuscript to Mr. Wills.

Some years after the death of George Eliot I was invited to a large luncheon-party in Brompton Square at which Sir Henry and Lady de Bathe, Mr. Corney Grain, and Mr. and Mrs. Robert Wyndham were guests, but there were so many people present that I did not know them all.

After a time the conversation turned on George Eliot and her work and I remarked, "She should never have married. Indeed, she had only married for one reason, for she had the world at her feet, and it was still revering her memory."

After I had made this remark, a tall, thin man at the other end of the table asked me what I thought was the reason why she had married.

"To have the word 'Wife' on her tombstone," I replied without hesitation.

A strange look came into his eyes. "I was her husband," he said simply.

"I am so sorry," I exclaimed, "but you never loved her as I did."

When lunch was over Mr. Cross came and shook hands with me. "Did you know my wife well?" he asked.

"Not very well," I replied, "for I met her only some six or seven times, but I knew her because I have read everything she wrote and that is why I said what I did."

"You have remarkable intuition. You were quite right in what you said."

He shook hands with me and went away.

I relate this story because in so many instances during my life my spontaneous impulse has led me into saying what I thought at the time, without considering anything but its truth or its consequences.

Soon after "Diplomacy" started, Frank Burnand, who was afterwards editor of *Punch*, came to see the play. He went straight home, sat down to his desk and did not leave it until he had finished a burlesque of it which he called "Dora and Diplunacy."

It was produced at the little Strand Theatre under the management of Mrs. Swanborough and one afternoon the whole of the company went to see it. Miss Lottie Venne, in a marvellous red dress, gave an extraordinarily fine burlesque of Mrs. Bancroft which made her very angry, while W. S. Penley, who later immortalised himself in "The Private Secretary" and in "Charlie's Aunt," gave evidence of his future skill by his imitation of Arthur Cecil as Baron Stein. I fared no better than the others in the burlesque of Dora by Miss Rachel Sanger, a beautiful young woman and a very competent artist. So remarkable was her performance, which did not make me angry but amazed me, that on leaving the theatre, I said to my husband, "I wish I could give as good a performance as that."

In those days of "Diplomacy" we were a very happy family in the theatre. Mrs. Bancroft, in the zenith of her success, was always most amiable.

A poignant recollection of that time is that on the night before the ill-fated *Prince Imperial*, the son of the Empress Eugenie, left London to go to the Zulu War, he came to see the play. The theatre was crowded. Every seat was occupied and the only place in which he could be accommodated was in the orchestra. On that occasion I saw him for the first and only time. There, behind the curtain, Mrs. Bancroft, too, looked at him. She was very fond of seeing noted people, and one night when Baker Pasha was

in the house, she asked Mr. Sugden to hold the curtain back in order that she might have a look at him.

After the end of the run of "Diplomacy," which took us to late in 1878, my husband and I returned to the Court where we reopened in "A Scrap of Paper" and then produced "The Ladies' Battle," which had been translated and adapted from "La Bataille des Dames" by my brother Tom.

Its production was really due to the fact that we had nothing else suitable at the time. Yet it made an instant success.

My performance of the Countess D'Autreval reminds me of one of the greatest compliments I ever had in my professional career, a compliment which every actor would treasure in the innermost recesses of his memory since it comes from a brother actor.

A frequent visitor to the Court was Coquelin Aîné, that wonderful French actor, then a member of the Théâtre Français, who, like certain of our own great actors, had turned all his alleged defects into qualities. Coquelin was short, rather fat, with a turned-up nose and a poor voice, yet by constant practice he so improved his voice that it rang with the clarion notes of a silver trumpet and he acquired such complete control over his body that it became a thing of perfect grace.

That is acting !

The plot of "The Ladies' Battle" turns on the conflict between the love of an elder and a younger woman for the hero of the play.

I was much too young for the part of the elder woman and I had to devise a means of showing her years without painting shadows on my face, for the woman was, obviously, not old enough to have wrinkles.

At length I hit on the expedient of picking up a mirror and, looking into it, discovering the first silver thread among the gold.

This is a tragedy which every woman recognises and I

expressed that tragedy by facial expression, without a word. Coquelin, with the generosity of the real artist, wrote to Monsieur Regnier, the then manager of the Comedie Française, and told him of this "business," for "The Ladies' Battle" was still in the repertoire of that theatre. Monsieur Regnier sent over one of the leading actors and the *regisseur* of the company to see our performance of the play. They made elaborate notes of what I did, incorporated them in the prompt copy of the manuscript and every actress who played the part in the theatre after that day was, I was told, instructed to introduce the episode.

Among the people who saw it was Mr. Locker Lampson, the poet. One day early in the run he said to me, "I don't like the tag, for I don't think it's good enough for the play. Will you speak a few lines of mine?"

When I said I should be delighted, he gave me the following :

The fight is o'er and I have won the day
But life, ah me, seems anything but gay.
Who knows, not one, not even those who've lost
Nor ever will how much to-day has cost.

I always spoke those lines.

Another poet who wrote verses specially for me was Adelaide Anne Procter. They are particularly illuminating, for I have always held that they threw a strong light on her own life, as I told her mother, Mrs. Barry Cornwall, who was a delightful, witty and remarkable old lady.

When I was still in my teens I called with a friend on her day at home to help pour out tea.

"Mrs. Procter," I said, "you've got on a new cap."

"And why not, young lady ; why not, when the Baroness Burdett-Coutts has just got married?"

When I handed her her cup, I had forgotten to put in her regulation two lumps of sugar. She was very cross and exclaimed, "*Two* lumps, you fool, *two* lumps!"

Undaunted, I replied, "Don't be so cross or impatient.

You've reached the great plane of life and I am only an ant trying to climb up the hill of it."

"Oh, are you?" was her retort. "How old are you?"
"Eighteen."

"Are you? So am I; it's only when I look in the damned looking-glass that I know I'm eighty."

She always declared that her daughter Adelaide was never in love. With my usual courage I said, "She was, Mrs. Procter."

"How do you know?"

"Through some lines she wrote for me which have never been published."

"Say them to me."

I did.

My story is a simple one
A very old one, too.
I had a friend and I was told
That he would prove untrue.

He told me that he loved me
And I believed his vow;
He went away and left me,
You know all my story now.

No woman could have written those lines unless she had loved. I had them set to music and sang them very often.

As the Countess D'Autreval, Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson, then a very young man, painted my portrait for which I sat to him at his home in Bedford Square, where he had converted one of the rooms into a studio.

In addition to him, Mr. Val Prinsep, Mr. Yorke, Mr. Morris and Sir William Orpen also painted my portrait as well as Mrs. Anna Lea Merritt. My husband, too, sketched me in every part I played and on a good many other occasions when I was not acting. He always used to say, "Your face is as changeable as your mind is variable. In my opinion the only man who could ever catch your expression is Sir John Millais."

In those days we were too poor to get him to paint me, as he painted Henry Irving and John Hare.

Sir William Orpen, who was, of course, a most distinguished painter of portraits, was a cheerful little man and was punctuality personified. I used to arrive at his studio at eleven o'clock in the morning and he was always ready for me.

The first time I went to him, I went in fear and trembling. I mean it literally, although I do not tremble often and fear very few things.

I had, however, heard that this great little man charged nothing less than one thousand pounds for a portrait and I knew that the Committee which had arranged for my portrait was going to pay only three hundred pounds.

Before I stepped on the dais I said, "Don't you think you will be wasting your time, Sir William, in painting me? You should have done it forty years ago when you were a tiny little baby. Then it might have been possible to pay your fee."

"You are quite wrong," he replied. "Your committee is a splendid one with two royal princesses at the head of the list, and I *want* to paint your portrait."

"I have come in a brown velvet cloak and my much-abused bonnet, but my bonnet I can wear straight on my head with my hair parted in the middle. Don't you remember what Dickens wrote in one of his books, 'Straight up this path and keep in your place.'"

"I like brown," replied Sir William; "I'll paint you as you are, bonnet and all. Get up and sit down."

I did.

"How do you sit when you are at home?"

"Like this," I said, leaning my cheek on my left hand.

"But don't paint my left hand, for I have had a double fracture of the wrist."

"We'll have the double fracture in."

"Don't paint my eyebrow as it is because my temporal artery was severed in an accident."



T. 11. 11. 11.
 with love and deep admiration
 William Orpen
 - 1928

DAME MADGE KENDAL

From the painting by Sir William Orpen, R.A., in the National Gallery of British Art, Millbank, S W.

"With love and deep admiration"—William Orpen

"We'll have that in, too," he said.

He took up his palette, put it over his thumb and without drawing a line on the canvas painted straight on it.

The picture was finished in six or seven sittings of an hour each.

As I relate elsewhere (p. 168), a statue of me as Galatea was modelled by Mr. T. C. Brock, R.A., but Miss Paton, a sister of Sir Noel Paton, also sculptured me in that part and Mr. Bruce Joy did a beautiful bust of me, while my hand and arm were done in marble, and my hand alone, modelled in silver, as a paper-weight.

By reason of the similarity of our names, Johnston Forbes-Robertson declared we must be related and has always called me and written to me by the name of "kins-woman."

Although his reputation rests on the work he did in the theatre as an actor, he really started life with the intention of making his name as a painter. At that time, although he had played many parts he was very enthusiastic about his painting and with his handsome face and clear-cut features looked most artistic as he stood in front of the canvas with his palette and brush in his hand.

I can still see him in my mind's eye as he painted and talked of Phelps with whom he had acted, and whose portrait as Cardinal Wolsey he also painted.

His heart was divided, I think, to such an extent that I remember my dear husband quoting to him, "Forbey, how happy could you be with either, were t'other dear charmer away? But I think your real charmer is the theatre, for there you must learn concentration."

Dear Forbes, who was almost always the most amiable of men, was very much influenced by a conversation like that. Being not only a devoted son, but also a devoted brother,—he adored his sisters, he loved his aunts, he liked giving presents to his godchildren,—and so, finding that the stage at that time was in a flourishing condition, he decided to accept the offer the Bancrofts made him to act

at the Prince of Wales's and he remained, as he was born and as he will be until he dies, an actor.

I have no intention of following his career through the long list of parts he played, but I do want to say that I think his first scene in "Hamlet" with the Court was the perfection of a prince's actions.

Most Hamlets, I have noticed, sat apart and took no notice of his mother or the ladies of the Court.

When he entered, Forbes-Robertson's Hamlet advanced and kissed his mother's hand with reverence and then he paid attention to the elder ladies gathered round. That was what only a real prince would do. He did it, and in my mind he has remained ever since a prince.

Many years ago Mrs. Oscar Beringer wrote a play called "Tares." He played in it. I produced it. There was one scene in which the character he represented had had a past with a lady, but he had begun to grow tired of her as another and fairer woman was beginning to attract him.

The two emotions were not easy to indicate without words, but by the concentration of imagination which I have always held as the finest definition of acting I have been able to discover in a long time of contemplation devoted to the subject, we achieved the result.

At rehearsal I said to him, "As the woman you are growing tired of goes up the stage you give a tiny sigh of relief; you walk slowly down the stage and, as you turn, the woman you are beginning to fall in love with enters.

"I don't want you to move or to speak one word. You hear her footstep as it falls on the carpet and the expression in your face must change. Make any gesture that comes from your own inner-consciousness, a clasp of your hands, an alteration in the attitude of your body, to show the reaction on your mind to the two women."

He carried it out beautifully and made a great personal success in spite of the fact that the play did not succeed.

After that performance I said to him, "Before you can stamp your reputation on the public you must make three

great successes. By that time the public will begin to know your name."

It is different in these days.

What's in a name? There is no need to think, as Shakespeare would have us, of roses or whether they smell sweet or not.

Some actors arrive in a night, but do the reputations made so quickly last so long as those that are built up more slowly by laying one stone of success on another stone of success?

During the last twenty-five years of my life I have seen stars come and stars go, and yet the stage still lingers, like the moon.

Great as is my admiration for the work my "kinsman" did on the stage, I cross swords with him on one point. Since his retirement, he has constantly talked about the higher standard of acting to-day compared with what it was in his young days and he lays special stress on what is called "team work."

Team work seems to me to be the fetish of the hour in every department of life,—both in work and in play.

We never talked of team work on the stage in my time. We employed it.

That was what our rehearsals were for.

It does not take the ordinary intelligence very long to commit the words of a part to memory. Once learned and the white heat of concentrated imagination having been brought to bear on the characterisation, rehearsal gave each individual the opportunity of reacting to the impersonation of every other character with whom he came into contact in the play.

The result was perfect team work, though nobody dreamed of using the phrase.

What we did was to produce an effect comparable, under the direction of the stage manager, as we called the producer, to that obtained by a fine orchestra under the baton of an accomplished conductor.

Forbes-Robertson is very enthusiastic about the young people and is, therefore, beloved by them.

I cannot even in my old age, to win popularity, be as good-natured as my kinsman who sees in the present drama a great advance in the plays and in the cleverness of the actors of to-day.

I also do see clever young people, but I always feel that they lack all sincerity in their work.

There are, of course, great exceptions to this sweeping rule, as there must be exceptions to every sweeping statement and every rule, and I realise the young people have had a great deal to battle with in the terribly decadent condition through which the stage is passing.

It made itself most manifest when skirts were so shortened to the knees that I referred to them as "*kilts*."

No actress can speak sentiment in curtailed clothing ; it requires the majestic sweeping of a train or, at any rate, something down to the ankles to suggest romance.

Naked truth, no matter how naked or how true, may not be beautiful and there is high authority for believing that "beauty is truth."

This inclination for little clothing has grown, until at one of my last visits to the theatre I saw a lady who had dressed herself very carefully in the dressing-room which is always provided for the purpose, come on the stage and immediately begin undressing herself.

I protest against this having any connection with art of any kind. It is merely a matter of showing off a beautiful figure. We, however, go to the theatre to hear words and arguments and conversation of all kinds, but not to see a lady undress herself.

This reminds me of a story of the dark ages when I was young. I was asked by a very great lady to go with her to a party at her sister-in-law's.

On arriving, the hostess advanced and addressing her sister-in-law said, "Oh, Janet, this is my great evening

party and here you are in a dress with a tiny little V cut at the throat and long sleeves."

"Well, my dear," was my friend's reply, "I am dressed very well. This"—pointing to the tiny little V at her throat—"is for the general world; the rest I keep for your brother."

I need scarcely add that my friend was an early Victorian, a very early Victorian, but I do like to think brothers are sometimes considered. There are brothers in the audience, you know; there may be husbands, but husbands already know what is to be seen. Brothers have yet to learn. Let us keep something for the brothers.

"The Queen's Shilling," our last production at the Court, ran until the end of the season, July 19th, 1879, and in association with Mr. Hare, for the first time, we went on our annual provincial tour.

For the next seven years of the Hare and Kendal partnership, we always spent our holidays together, as Mr. Hare said we must discuss the future and so could not be separated for a month or six weeks.

One of these holidays was to Venice. The things I particularly wanted to see were the monasteries, as Byron had done, and to bathe in the Lido.

My own idea was to arrive at night, to be met by a gondolier and to stop under the Bridge of Sighs and listen to the singing, as the voices drifted up the canal.

From my earliest years I had been a devout admirer of Byron, and when a certain priest asked me if I would like a copy of Ruskin's *Stones of Venice*, I explained that I only wanted to go to the room Byron had lived in, to see his inkstand and to touch the pens with which he wrote.

The priest and I became friends quickly and he told me all sorts of things about Byron that he knew, but nothing he ought not to have told me, for, being a priest, he knew only what was good of Byron.

That should be the case with everybody, for in spite of two or three vulgar jokes in "Don Juan," he wrote such

magnificent cantos on war and love. Were there ever such love poems !

“The Queen’s Shilling” was adapted by Mr. G. W. Godfrey from “Un Fils du Famille.” Proof of the skill with which the work had been done was given on an occasion when we were acting in another adaptation from the French and one of our audience wrote deploring our appearance in a foreign piece and asked for a revival of “that purely English comedy, ‘The Queen’s Shilling.’”

This play enabled my husband to display a remarkable gift,—that of turning pale when he wished. He used it with wonderful effect in a scene in which, representing a private who meets his colonel in society, he is forced to deny his identity which the colonel is insistent in his efforts to prove.

The part my husband played was that of a soldier who had been wounded in the arm, and after an acrimonious passage of words with the colonel, the latter gripped him by the wounded place so harshly that my husband’s face actually blanched. He became so white that women in the audience used to faint.

It was one of his best parts. It has never been attempted since. This is one of the stones of his memorial.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ST. JAMES'S THEATRE

ON October 4th, 1879, the Hare and Kendal management of the St. James's Theatre, reconstructed and redecorated, began.

Many were the misgivings expressed by our friends that the venture would not succeed, for the St. James's was out of the playgoer's beaten track which was, at that time, practically centred in the Strand.

We opened with "The Queen's Shilling" with, what was called in those days, a *lever de rideau* in the shape of a costume play, "Monsieur le Duc," by Mr. Val Prinsep, the artist. In this Mr. Hare played the Duc de Richelieu.

It is not my intention to go categorically through the plays we produced during our tenancy.

The production of "The Falcon" brought me into contact with Lord Tennyson long before Mr. Gladstone persuaded him to accept a peerage, which he did, not as a tribute to himself but as the sovereign's recognition of literature which, to us Victorians, he undoubtedly stood for.

At that time he lived at Haslemere, with Mr. Matthew Arnold as his next-door neighbour. At that time Mr. Arnold's daughter, the present Lady Sandhurst, was a little girl, and when we drove up to the gate of Lord Tennyson's house she was standing at the window with her nose closely pressed against the pane to see who was coming. When she grew up I used to remind her of this incident at which, with characteristic humour, she used to smile.

When we were shown into the room in which Lord Tennyson sat, we found his wife and their son Hallam

with him. She was almost an invalid, and Hallam Tennyson, who was a tall, strongly built man, used to carry her about in his arms and put her where she desired to sit.

When we sat down he turned to me and asked me to move my chair so that she would be able to see me without having the necessity of turning her head. When his brother, Lionel Tennyson, married Miss Locker Lampson, Hallam carried his mother into the church. A beautiful and touching sight.

After luncheon the Hon. Mrs. Greville arrived and, in a little while, addressing the poet, said, "Master, won't you read to us?"

Tennyson was smoking a long clay pipe at the time and turning to me asked, "Would you like to hear me read?"

"Indeed, sir, I should," I replied.

"What shall I read?"

"The Northern Farmer," I answered, and quoted:

"Doesn't thou 'ear my 'erse's legs, as they canters away?
Proputty, proputty, proputty—that's what I 'ears 'em saay."

"You know my poem?" he enquired with a mixture of pleasure and curiosity in his voice.

"Indeed, I do, sir," and again I quoted:

"Doan't thou marry for munny, but goa where munny is!"

He was very pleased and asked me what I thought the most dramatic poem he had ever written.

Unhesitatingly I replied, "The one which begins, 'We were two daughters of one race.'"

That seemed to please him, too.

It was my enthusiasm for this plot which induced him to write "The Promise of May." It was produced in November, 1882, by Mrs. Bernard Beere, but it failed badly. *Punch* summed it up in the words, "The Promise of May—November a Frost."

Before we left, Tennyson said he would like to see a rehearsal of "The Falcon." He accordingly came to the

St. James's Theatre one morning and sat in the stalls with a screen around him, a rug over his knees and a hot-water bottle at his feet.

I think he was, without exception, the most complimentary man I have ever met. He declared I was the image of a great friend of his and he gave an order to Mrs. Merritt, whose "Love Locked Out" hangs in the Tate Gallery, to paint my portrait.

The play, in which my husband sang a song composed by Mr. Willert Beale, was a great success and Tennyson was delighted. Years later he mentioned it, and also referred to the pleasure the success of Becket had given him and the success Henry Irving and Ellen Terry had made in it.

The falcon we used in the play was brought from Saxe-Weimar. In order to accustom it to being carried by him, my husband fed it every day and taught it to open its wings at a given signal. It was a ferocious creature. When it was brought to us and I was told I must feed it with meat, I gave it the beef steak which I had ordered for my husband's dinner. When he returned home I had to inform him, "Your dinner has been eaten by your falcon. That bird swallowed the steak as you or I would have swallowed a pill."

On the evening the Prince of Wales (King Edward) came to see the play, it strangled itself with its chain. We always had a property bird in the theatre to be used in a case of emergency, but my husband said it made him so miserable that he set about getting another. A French sailor came to our house with one, and both he and the bird so alarmed me that I insisted on its being put down and left in the hall.

Mr. W. G. Wills who, as I have related, had dramatised "Adam Bede," took the plot of Douglas Jerrold's old "Black-Eyed Susan," and re-wrote the play which he read to us one evening after supper at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Hare, who were then living in Kensington.

What a brilliant writer Wills was, but what an untidy, unkempt man. As he grew warmer with the reading, he removed his paper cuffs from his wrists and placed them on the table beside him. They were the first, and I think, the only ones of the kind I ever saw, and he took off at least two pairs that evening.

In a wonderful scene in which William returns, he had to say, "Home at last. With you and the boy, all sunshine," to which I, as Susan, replied, "No, William, why look at them plates on the dresser, there's a shadder behind."

What a poignant line ; how true of the lives of so many of us ; how true of my own life.

The production of this play was made remarkable by a most realistic setting of the ship which has often been imitated but has never been excelled. To add verisimilitude to what was not, "a bald and uninteresting narrative," to quote the Mikado, six regular marines were engaged for the duties which fall to such men when they have to arrest a sailor for striking a superior officer, a vital incident in the play.

After the men had been with us for a few weeks, they were called back to their proper duty as they had to go on the Red River Expedition with Sir Garnet Wolseley.

I had got interested in these kindly creatures and found out which of them had wives. I promised to go to the dock and see them off. I wish I had not. It was great suffering to see the women and children and to know they had to part with their dear ones, some of whom they would never see again. The men and women seemed full of sorrow and everything was very melancholy until the band began to play. Then, as if the wand in a harlequin's hand had touched all the men, they pulled themselves together and prepared for departure, kissing their wives and children most cheerfully.

By one of those ironic circumstances which constantly occur, the band played "The Girl I Left Behind Me," although it struck me as most inappropriate for the occasion.

They had evidently heard it before, and all went merry as a marriage bell.

How extraordinary is human nature under all and every circumstance.

What adaptive creatures of clay we are !

Some years later, when Lord Wolseley, as he had become, was Commander-in-Chief in Ireland, I lunched at the Royal Hospital, Dublin, with him and his wife, and told him I believed not one creature would have gone on the boat if it had not been for the band.

Lord Wolseley replied that, as he was an Irishman, music seemed to be the soul of life and was not, in his opinion, the goddess of war.

"The Money Spinner" was Sir Arthur Pinero's first important play, and its production was the beginning of an association with his work which continued for many years. After a revival of my favourite, "The Lady of Lyons," we produced a double bill consisting of my brother's play "Home," adapted from the French, "L'Aventurière," with "The Cape Mail," which Mr. Clement Scott also adapted from a French original, "Jeanne qui Pleure et Jeanne qui Rit."

The story is that of a woman who is fond of her blind, widowed mother-in-law, and when her husband has gone to the war and is reported dead, she reads fictitious letters to the mother in order to keep the knowledge of the terrible tragedy from her.

My part, that of the young wife, offers an amazing opportunity for an actress who can change her manner and can stand the enormous strain of depicting the two strong emotions.

As she is reading the latest letter she has manufactured, her husband stands in the doorway alive, and she has to improvise words to prevent the shock being too sudden for the old lady who was played magnificently by Mrs. Gaston Murray.

Let me pause to pay a tribute to the dramatic instinct

and the memory of Mr. Clement Scott who gave me this wonderful opportunity in my early career.

Our double bill was succeeded by "The Squire," which was unquestionably one of the greatest triumphs of the Hare and Kendal management and created a phrase which was current for a long time in the newspapers that it "wafted the scent of the hay over the footlights," so perfect a picture was it of country life.

Its production created a sensation, for its plot was everywhere assumed to have been borrowed without admission from Thomas Hardy's *Far from the Madding Crowd*. Mr. Pinero, as he then was, stated emphatically that he had never read the novel so that the similarity of the stories was merely one of those coincidences which if not frequent are not unknown either in the theatre or in literature.

The result of this acrimonious discussion was that, one night, when the curtain went up, I noticed in a private box Mr. Hardy himself, Sir George Lewis, presumably his solicitor, and Mr. Comyns Carr who had come to see the play and discover how far the plot of "The Squire" agreed with the novel.

The trouble arose through Mr. Hare having mislaid the manuscript among the hundreds he had received. Mr. Comyns Carr lost his temper at the delay in receiving an answer and asked for the play.

Eventually, Mr. Hare wrote that he did not like it as "Mrs. Kendal did not like her part."

Alas! I had never even seen the manuscript.

Some considerable time later Mr. Hare did find the manuscript and he and Mr. Comyns Carr became good friends again.

In the second act of "The Squire" I wore an evening dress, the material for which I searched carefully to get, as it had a thread of gold which I wanted the fire to play upon in the great scene of the play in which I burned some love letters.

One day a lady, the wife of one of the members of the

company, came to me and said she did not like the dress and she thought something more becoming ought to be got.

I did not agree with her and I continued to wear it.

One evening, her husband, who was playing in "The Squire," was taken suddenly ill and, as it was thought his illness was serious, a telegram was sent asking her to come at once.

She was at a dinner-party and came straight on. As she threw off her cloak, she revealed the fact that she was wearing a dress made of the same material and cut in the exact manner as the one I was wearing which she did not like !

Tableau !!!

The Comyns Carr version of "Far from the Madding Crowd" was produced later at the Old Globe Theatre with Mrs. Bernard Beere as the heroine and Mr. Charles Kelly as Gabriel Oak, but it had no great success.

I never had the opportunity of seeing Mrs. Beere play either this part or any other, although a couple of years later she made an enormous success at the Haymarket Theatre in "Fedora," which was produced under the direction of the Bancrofts in the spring of 1883.

I only met her once. This was at a large bazaar which was attended by everybody who was anybody, and at which I was asked to preside at the photograph stall. Mrs. Beere had just made a sensational success in "As in a Looking Glass," an adaptation of the novel of the same name, and her photograph was in every shop window, so that I knew her well by sight.

As I stood at my stall, this lady, beautifully dressed,—she was a striking figure, for she was very tall,—came slowly up to me and raising her lorgnette and staring at me fixedly said, in a supercilious tone, "Are you selling *your* photographs, Mrs. Kendal?"

"No," I replied, "but I have some excellent ones of Mrs. Bernard Beere."

"Show me some," she drawled.

I took up a few small photographs which were retailed in the shops at a shilling each.

"Very good," she said. "How much are they?"

"Five pounds each," I replied in my blandest tones.

"I'll take this one," she rejoined. "How cheap!"

I consider a woman capable of such wit and aplomb should have this anecdote told to her credit.

In any case she put me in my place at that time.

Several years afterwards, when the Garrick Theatre was being built by Sir W. S. Gilbert for Sir John Hare, a delay occurred because water was struck when they were digging for the foundations of the stage.

Not anticipating such an accident Sir John Hare had engaged certain members of his company for the opening play on a given date. Among them was Mrs. Bernard Beere.

When it was decided that the opening of the theatre must be postponed, Sir John Hare informed Mrs. Beere.

"Water under the stage," she replied, "has nothing to do with me," and she claimed that her salary should begin on the appointed date.

Sir John came in a state of excitement to my husband and said, "Will you see Mrs. Beere for me and try to get her to come to some settlement."

"My dear Johnny," replied my husband, "I'm sorry, but I can't do your partner's work now that I am no longer your partner."

Off Sir John Hare went to Sir Squire Bancroft, who took upon himself the duties of mediator, with the result that the matter was settled amicably and everybody shook hands.

It was "The Squire," which, as I relate later, led to the first offer made to me to go to America. The compliment was the greater in that it came from that consummate actor and dramatist, Mr. Dion Boucicault, the father of the late actor of the same name known to a younger generation and the husband of Miss Irene Vanbrugh.



MR. AND MRS. KENDAL IN "IMPULSE" [W & D. Downey.]

One of the greatest successes of the Hare and Kendal management at the St. James's was "Impulse." It ran to crowded houses for many months.

The success of the play was unquestionably due to my husband, the catchword of whose part was, "Mrs. Beresford, you are, you really are," and such was his skill in speaking it that, in spite of its constant recurrence, the words never became monotonous or failed to evoke the heartiest laughter from the audience.

The public appreciation of the play was enormous, for the cast, which included Mr. Herbert Waring and Miss Linda Dietz, as the erring wife, did not have the advantage of Mr. Hare, while my own part, that of Mrs. Beresford, was only some forty or fifty lines.

It was the only year in all the fourteen years of our management that I could accept invitations after the performance, and, making the most of my opportunity, I went to nearly every party and reception to which I was invited.

I was not tired after the exertion of the evening and was, therefore, equal to going out and enjoying myself.

When, however, I had played an emotional part I could no more go to a party after the performance than I could fly,—a performance I shall never attempt.

To-day, I notice that most prominent actors and actresses, no matter what parts they have been playing, are constantly seen in society and in the night-clubs which are a recognised part of the life of to-day.

I may be quite wrong, but I am firmly of the opinion that if one is a really conscientious actor and plays for all one is worth when one is on the stage, it is impossible to go out even two or three times a week "after the opera is over."

Similarly, if one is to give one's best to the public,—and the public pays its money for the express purpose of seeing an actor at his best,—it is, again, in my opinion, unfair to be out all day, playing golf or at the races, and go tired into the theatre just in time, or with barely time to dress or put yourself in the mood.

One must divest one's mind of external thoughts and invest it with those of the character, just as one must divest one's body of its external clothing and invest it in the clothing of the character one is to represent. Of course, it is quite easy to walk through a part, making no effort to convey the emotion which animates it, but that is *not* acting and the people who do that sort of thing are not actors, they are merely "on the stage."

At the end of the "Impulse" season, I had three brooches made, representing a flitch of bacon for each of the three ladies in the company, Miss Dietz, Mrs. Gaston Murray and myself, and on them was engraved, "We have lived in harmony without matrimony or alimony."

"Young Folks Ways," by Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett and Mr. William Gillette, the American author-actor, which succeeded "Impulse," was particularly interesting in view of subsequent events, for it was in that play that Mr. (Sir) George Alexander made his London debut. He was very tall, very thin, not to say lanky in those days.

Another reason for my remembering the play was that one of the leading parts was played by Mrs. Hermann Vezin, a really great actress. I cried with joy when she came into the theatre, for it was impossible to watch her without learning something. In my admiration for her, I saw that she had a dressing-room to herself and a maid of her own, and I did everything possible, not merely to show my appreciation of her wonderful skill, but also my regard for her.

She was an actress to the tips of her fingers.

One day, one of the leading members of the company who was playing a scene with her did something which called for her disapproval.

"Don't do that," she said quietly to him, "only an amateur would do that."

The look that flashed from the actor's eyes was unmistakable; he never forgave her all the time she was with us.

The day George Alexander arrived for the first rehearsal,

the stage manager came to me and said, "The new juvenile man has arrived, Mrs. Kendal."

When we had shaken hands, he went to the Green Room to be introduced to the other members of the company, and Miss Campbell, one of the young actresses, whispered to me, "Oh, Mrs. Kendal, isn't he good looking?"

"Yes, very," I replied, "but the great thing is you are not to take any notice of that, but to wait until you see him *act*."

Towards the end of 1914, certain of his friends, remembering that on the following first of February he would celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of his management, resolved to recognise the occasion by the presentation of a Silver Loving Cup, suitably inscribed.

When the date for the ceremony was finally arranged, the promoters asked me to make the presentation.

I declined, saying that it seemed to me to be an office which ought to be undertaken by, at least, a duke.

Shortly after, they returned and said that the suggestion to ask me had emanated from George Alexander himself, who felt that such a tribute, on such an occasion, should be from me, one of the members of his own profession and the wife of his manager of the St. James's Theatre in which he had made his first London appearance. Under the circumstances I could do nothing other than agree.

It was a memorable gathering, with the Bancrofts, the Pineros, the Trees, and other leading members of our profession seated in the front row of the stalls which were full of our comrades and members of the social world who had subscribed to the testimonial.

"It is a very difficult task you have undertaken," my husband said to me when I told him I had consented to make the address. "What are you going to do about it?"

"I don't know," I said, "but between now and the time I have to make my speech I shall pray to have a brain wave."

The brain wave came. This is the speech I made.

"Dear Comrade," I said, turning to Alexander, "I

have been told by your friends that I am to speak a few 'speaks' to you to-day. The reason given was that the first time you entered the St. James's Theatre I was here, when a young girl came up to me and said, 'Look, Mrs. Kendal, that's our new member, George Alexander. I wonder if he's as nice as he looks.' I replied, 'Boys are always nice.'

"In those days, you could not be called anything else ; for boyhood shows the man, as morning shows the day.

"Well, from that day we have all watched your progress. I say *we*, for I see many here who have made you their *matinée* idol and if, in looking round, you find some 'silver locks among the gold,' we still remain your sincere admirers.

"Your steady, steadfast work year by year has at last arrived at this point. To-day the same admirers, with many added, have come to congratulate you on your twenty-fifth year of management,—a splendid achievement.

"We are proud of you, proud of you for many things. I must count them or I may forget.

"First, we are proud of your being a J.P.

"Secondly, we are proud of your work at the County Council where for years and years you have done splendidly well.

"Thirdly, we are proud of you as a patriot, a real patriot, for in spite of all temptations to act plays of other nations *you've* stuck to Englishmen.

"We are indeed proud of you for that, and our pride in you increases when we think of you as a manager.

"Your plays have always been charmingly produced, every detail well carried out, nothing left undone that thought and care and good taste could improve ; indeed, looking before and behind the curtain during your years of management, the St. James's Theatre has been irreproachable.

"And management has many trials.

"I was your first trial.

"We are proud of you as an actor.

"Now friends, this is your part. Here you begin. Please take up your cue at the proper time. Attention, you soldiers of the King. Eyes right. Prepare. Handkerchiefs, hats, hands, lungs and hearts, and tell your hero of to-day *yourselves* what you think of him as an actor."

'Now comes the roar of the cannon. ONE—TWO—THREE.

"But best of all, we are proud of you as a man; and now our pride is mingled with affection. 'A generous soul is sunshine to the mind.' If the poet was right, you have had many pleasant hours.

"Happy the man and happy he alone,
He who can call to-day his own;
He who, serene within, can say
To-morrow, do thy worst, for I have lived to-day.

"Accept this cup, chosen by some, approved by all your friends. It is full of good wishes and overflowing with messages of affection.

"Inside you will find a cheque which we ask you to give to any theatrical charity or charities you choose. In these hard times we know you would like your less fortunate comrades to share in the pleasure of your *silver* jubilee, which may prove to them a *golden* one.

"I see many tiny fairies in this cup, all skipping over one another and carrying little placards on their backs and flags in their hands with, 'Success, Long Life, and Happiness, and good health, good plays, good actors and audiences, hundreds and hundreds of them' written on them; and one particularly fat little chap, on his head, carries these words :

"Sweet tales of love I carry
That only I can forge
And must be whispered to one ear
That ear belongs to George.

"Give pause while I address your wife.

"Come into court, my lady, come into court. Come into court, Florence Alexander.

"You must be congratulated for many things, for you

have taught other women to realise the biblical meaning of that word, 'helpmate,' without which a wife is no good.

"And what a wife you have been! For here at the St. James's Theatre, your magic touch has made the short tall, the dark fair, the fat thin. How do you do it? It is the tenth wonder of the world.

"Your friends desire you will receive this tray."

(It was a silver tray with a suitable inscription).

"They hope you will like it and live to sit many years behind it, having first wished your friends to accept your invitation to tea, when I know you will not spare the milk of human kindness, and will sweeten far better than sugar with all your kind thoughts.

"Long life and happiness to you both. God bless you."

The occasion was graced by the presence of the late Princess Royal, who sat in a private box. When my part of the proceedings was over her Royal Highness invited me to go there for a cup of tea and there, too, I had taken for her inspection the silver cup and the tray which had been presented to Sir George and Lady Alexander.

Soon after the production of "Young Folks Ways," we lent George Alexander to Miss Mary Anderson to play the part of her husband in "Comedy and Tragedy," a one-act piece specially written for her by W. S. Gilbert, which she acted during her first season as an after-piece to "Pygmalion and Galatea."

She was among the few, the very few, actresses I have known who have taken London by storm.

It was exactly half a century ago, this year, that, as a very young woman, she came to London to act under Mr. Henry E. Abbey's management at the Lyceum while the regular company of that theatre went to America under his auspices.

Very soon after her arrival, "Our Mary," as the American public and the American press invariably referred to her, was brought to our house by the Hon. Lewis Wingfield, a very gifted man and an artist at heart who was stage

struck and had played Roderigo at the Haymarket when I played Desdemona in Mr. Walter Montgomery's company.

He was a great friend of my brother Tom, and one day when we were rehearsing "Othello," he told me that his mother, who was very interested in his work on the stage, desired to lend me some of her diamonds to wear as Desdemona.

On the first night my dresser brought me a case, full of beautiful jewels, on which I gazed with admiration.

I was so afraid that I might lose one of them that I put on only a small brooch, and very unhappy I was all the time I had it on. I only wore it as I was fearful that if I did not she might think I was ungrateful of her courtesy.

The next day I wrote her an appreciative letter for her kindness. How often I used to think how nice I should have looked if I had worn them *all* as she evidently intended I should do !

Later Mr. Wingfield took to designing the scenery and costumes for plays and did the *décor* of "Romeo and Juliet," when Miss Anderson revived it at the Lyceum.

I shall not attempt to describe her beauty. Unlike Olivia's in "Twelfth Night," it is not to be inventoried.

Miss Anderson made her debut in "Ingomar," which is still remembered, and will be for a long time, I believe, for it contains two verses that have in them something of the quality of immortality.

What love is, if thou wouldst be taught
Thy heart must teach alone.
Two souls with but one single thought,
Two hearts that beat as one.

And whence comes love? Like morning's light
It comes without thy call.
And how dies love? A spirit bright
Love never dies at all.

The speaking of those two verses is the most delicate test of an artist's sensibility and knowledge of the tender passion. Their very spirit subdued that of the wild man Ingomar

who was played by Mr. J. H. Barnes, " Handsome Jack Barnes," as he used to be called, and who was, at one time, a member of my husband's company when he acted important parts in " William and Susan " and " The Squire."

Mary Anderson was an instant success and, for a time, threw into the background everybody else, no matter how great was their possession of beauty or talent.

Among her greatest admirers was W. S. Gilbert, who immediately proposed a revival of " Pygmalion and Galatea " for her.

At his request, I went one day to see the rehearsal of the play.

In one scene, a big burly soldier brings on a dead fawn which he has shot with an arrow.

Mary Anderson's treatment of Galatea's reaction to the sight was markedly different from my own. She exhibited terror.

" Why are you frightened ? " I asked.

She replied, " Because the fawn is dead."

" What do you know of death as Galatea ? " was my retort. " You have been alive only two hours and even a dead fawn is a pretty creature. I don't agree with you, Mary. I used to pick up the fawn and fondle it and nurse it as if it was a child,—the maternal instinct."

I may have been wrong in always trying to bring out the maternal side of the parts I had gone on for.

I suppose the maternal instinct was, and always will be, my one weakness in life. I can't, even now, pass a baby in the street without speaking to it, so probably this is why my greatest mistakes in life have been made.

I never saw Miss Anderson play Galatea, so I never knew whether she acted the scene with the fawn, frightened or not.

I only know that her success was instantaneous and her manipulation of the draperies she wore, which were designed for her by Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema, R.A., was remarkable.

I saw a great deal of her when she first came to London.

She was delightful ; naïve, and a charming companion. She entered the highest society, every member of which fell at her feet.

She retired before she was thirty, and, unlike many other artists in public life, remained in retirement, for she emerged only for a short time to give her services by appearing for certain charities during the war.

The production of "As You Like It" awakened sad memories of the brilliancy of Mr. Buckstone's Touchstone, which never failed to evoke peals of laughter from an audience which, in those days, knew its Shakespeare nearly as well as we did.

In his arrangement he always made me introduce the famous song beginning, "When Daisies pied and Violets Blue," sung by Spring in "Love's Labour Lost."

This was preserved in our production for which Mr. Hermann Vezin was engaged at a handsome salary to play Jaques, on account of his magnificent elocution.

Once I asked him why he preferred to act occasionally for a large sum per week instead of at fifteen or twenty pounds, when he would be certain of employment for the whole year.

His reply was, "I never take less now or will in the future than I have taken in the past for my services, and I never intend to."

I always thought it was a short-sighted policy.

Although I never professed to be a prophet regarding the result of a play, the production of Sir Arthur Pinero's adaptation of Sardou's "La Maison Neuve," under the title "Mayfair," showed how strangely sensitive is the result of a performance when the actors are tuned to concert pitch compared with one when they are overstrained and flat.

At the dress rehearsal everybody acted magnificently to an audience consisting only of the stage carpenters and the orchestra. At the fall of the curtain all the actors were jubilant. "We have a great success in store for us," said the two managers.

"We have a great failure in store for us," I replied. "The spirit, the go, the excitement are over and to-morrow the performance will be flat and heavy."

My words were realised.

This result was in conformity with the old adage of the theatre that a good dress rehearsal means a bad performance, and a bad dress rehearsal is the prelude to a magnificent first night.

The reason is obvious. The vitality and spirit of the actors put forth to their utmost to overcome the shortcomings of the last rehearsal ensure the exhibition of an extra *esprit* and vitality which carry not only the play but the audience with them.

This does not mean that I deprecate acting at dress rehearsals. Dress rehearsals are necessary in order that the producer may be sure that the colours of the costumes do not clash. The actors can take their dresses home with them and so get accustomed to wearing them; or, if there is any difficulty in the wearing of the costumes, more than one dress rehearsal can take place.

It is the overstraining of the actors, like the over-training of a boat's crew, which I deprecate.

Towards the end of the run of "Mayfair," when the business was dropping, Mr. Hare and my husband resolved to go to Paris to see the performance of "Antoinette Rigaud," which was to be our next production.

They left on a Sunday and on the Monday morning I went down to the theatre for a conference with Mr. Huy, our acting manager. I found that the booking was fairly good so I telegraphed to my husband that if they wished they could stop another day. That evening the house was crammed from floor to ceiling and the two actors who played my husband and Mr. Hare's parts were superb.

Every morning I went to the theatre and looked at the booking sheet and every day I sent a telegram, with the result that they remained in Paris the whole week.

On the Wednesday I was so elated at the fact that the

business had improved enormously, despite the non-appearance of the leading actors, that I went out and bought a larger hat than I had ever worn.

By the time Saturday came I was giving myself managerial airs for the first time in my life.

When Mr. Hare and my husband returned, they were amazed at the figures for the week, and Mr. Hare said he could not understand the situation. They, however, put their signatures to the accounts and in our hired brougham my husband and I drove away. Suddenly my husband burst out laughing for no apparent reason.

"What's the joke?" I asked.

"My dear," he replied, "I don't like to hurt your vanity, but last week was cattle show week and you could not have kept the people out of the house if you had tried. Both Johnnie and I, as managers, ought to be ashamed that we did not know the date but we had forgotten it in the excitement of going to Paris."

"The Wife's Sacrifice," adapted by Messrs. Sydney Grundy and Sutherland Edwards from "Martyre," renewed our association with the work of the former. Both my husband and I had a great admiration for Sydney Grundy's talent which, in our opinion, has never been recognized at its true value.

We first met Sydney Grundy when we were playing in Manchester where he had begun life as a young barrister.

Years later, when we were living in Taviton Street, Gordon Square, he called on us one day bringing with him a charmingly pretty young girl with a sweet little face and complexion and reddish hair. She did not have an R. to her name, she said "vewy" and "sowwy."

He told us that they had been married that morning and he proposed to take her in the evening to the Haymarket where I was playing *Galatea*.

After the final curtain had fallen, she came round to my dressing-room and naïvely asked, "Was it weally you?"

When I assured her it was, she said, "I like you ; can I come and stay with you ? "

"No, my dear child," I said, "you were married this morning ; you must go back to your husband."

"Oh," she replied. "Sydney won't mind if I stay with you."

It was with the greatest difficulty that I persuaded her that Sydney would mind.

I doubt whether to-day such a creature could be met with. She was a moving, walking gallery of innocence,—a living Galatea.

Always, later, when we played in Manchester, we stayed with the Grundys. She had a great quantity of hair, as I had, and one evening, it was Sunday, our husbands having gone out for a long walk, we hit on the brilliant notion of washing our heads. Before they were dry, the men came home to dinner and discovered us in our evening clothes with our hair down our backs. "Sydney," said my husband, "we can never take another walk for two hours, for these wives of ours are always up to some mischief."

Those happy days had a sad sequel.

After their twin boys had been born, the Grundys agreed to differ. One day we received a telegram saying that she had left her boys with her mother and was coming to stay with us. She did. She had brought an action for divorce against her husband, and when the decree had been made absolute we were playing in "Diplomacy." It was the first year that matinées had been thought of and we used to give a performance at the Prince of Wales's on Saturday afternoon. On one of those days, when I got home, I found that Ada had been out for some hours and had taken my little daughter Margaret, with her. As she had left no word where she was going, I grew more and more anxious as the hands of the clock moved slowly forward to six, to a quarter past and then to the half-hour. It was only then she returned, as I was on the point of starting to go back to the theatre.

"Where on earth have you been?" I asked.

"I have been to Sydney's chambers in the Temple to give him the kiss that Christ gave Peter,—the kiss of forgiveness. I felt I had to, as we loved one another or we thought we did."

"But why did you take Daisy when you were going for such a purpose?"

"Because," she replied, "her funny, strange, childish prattle made me forget my own grief a little."

Years went by after that before I met Sydney Grundy again, for the sad story had broken our relations. This meeting was by mere chance.

We were living at 145, Harley Street, at the time and as I was going down it with my daughter Margaret, a tall girl of fifteen or sixteen, he was walking up the street. Suddenly, he caught sight of us. His face changed and he caught hold of the railings of the house before which he stood.

I was so startled that I ran to him: he took my hand and I asked him to come into the house until he had recovered. After he had sat down I asked him, "What is the matter?"

"Send that girl upstairs and I'll tell you."

When Margaret went out of the room he said, "Her likeness to my wife startled me. It might have been her, herself. She has the same brown eyes, the same sweet face, the same coloured hair with a tiny bit of red in it, and the sun shining through it brought out all its radiance."

After that day he came very often to our house. Whenever he came he always wanted to see Margaret. One day he asked her if she knew anything about astrology.

He was a great believer in the science himself and always declared "the stars are the only real things in life." After that he sent my daughter a great many books on astrology.

Sydney Grundy was a most extraordinary character, a strange combination of weakness and strength. His regard for my husband was reciprocated in every way; their relations were more like those of twin brothers.

Grundy wrote many wonderful lines. Here are two :
One was :

No one can wound our honour but ourselves.

My husband often wrote his autograph under those words.
The other :

Love is a strange thing, it rises to great heights, it falls to great depths.

An epic poem tinged with philosophy.

"The Hobby Horse" was not a great pecuniary success, but Mr. Hare had a wonderful part in it which he played wonderfully, and as he wanted to take it on tour he determined to keep it in the bills for a hundred nights.

In order to give it the appearance of success he instructed our acting manager, Mr. Huy, to give away a certain number of seats every night.

The private boxes at the St. James's in those days were enormous. When they were quite empty they looked like caverns. Mr. Hare told Mr. Huy he must fill them. Mr. Huy did. Where he found the people who occupied those seats I never knew.

One night, I looked in at those boxes and could not help behaving very badly, for I laughed on the stage when I should not have done so. When the curtain fell Mr. Hare asked me what had happened to cause me to behave as I did.

I told him.

"But we must have the boxes filled ; they look so much better."

"If you ask me," I replied, "I prefer the boxes empty rather than filled with people like those. I can't imagine where Huy gets them from. I believe he makes them in the afternoon ; they see the Hobby Horse and die." The moment the last word left my lips I knew from Mr. Hare's expression that I had put both my feet in the wrong places.

He never spoke to me—except on the stage—for three weeks.

He could not always see my jokes ; at any rate, he could not see that one.

All my life I was opposed to giving away seats, although I liked to play to full houses as well as everyone else. I put it forcibly one day when I said, " If the public is not buying the seats, I can at least admire the way the stalls are upholstered and at the same time I can try new effects on the people who are present in a way I should not attempt with a large audience before me."

Although Mr. Hare did not always appreciate my jokes, he expected me to appreciate his.

On one occasion, he quarrelled with Mr. Wenman, one of the chief actors engaged in the cast and asked me, as the "leading lady," to send him to Coventry until he apologised.

The unfortunate thing was that the play began by both of us making our entrance together. How Mr. Wenman knew of Mr. Hare's request, I cannot say. I only know he did.

With his quick sense of humour he nodded and winked at me when we met.

A few nights after the request, an A.D.C. from St. James's Palace came to the theatre and my husband not being in his room the messenger came to me and said that the late Duke of Clarence wished to see the play next evening and desired the royal box should be reserved for him. I sent for my husband's valet and told him that I wanted to speak to him as quickly as possible.

" But Mr. Kendal is watching Mr. Hare and Mr. Wenman play chess, Madam," the man informed me.

When my husband came down to make the necessary arrangements for reserving the box for H.R.H. I sent for Mr. Hare and said, " Oh, Mr. Hare, you are a funny man ; but don't ask *me* to play chess with you, because I don't mind telling you I don't know the game."

Mr. Hare looked surprised and then remarked, " Oh, I forgot to tell you, Wenman *apologised* to me."

"Apologised," I replied slowly. "That is a thing all gentlemen should do at all times."

Bancroft, who was essentially a man of the world with an acute gift of observation, had a subtle appreciation of Mr. Hare's outlook. He had known Mr. Hare from his early manhood when he was a member of the Prince of Wales's Company.

"You know, Madge," he said to me one day, "John always wants the sun to shine on his back and chest at the same time and the sun does not always do it."

During the run of "The Hobby Horse" I met with an accident which might easily have shortened not only my career on the stage but my life. As was my custom in those days, I was going down to the theatre in a four-wheeled cab when, as the cab turned out of Harley Street into Henrietta Street, the horse had the staggers. As the cab lurched, I put my head out of the window to ask what was the matter and it came into contact with a lamp-post.

I must have cried out, for the coachman pulled up and as I got out of the cab I fell on the pavement with the blood pouring from my forehead for, as I was told later, my temporal artery had been severed.

Naturally, the crowd, which seems to spring from the earth in such cases, quickly gathered round, and a kind woman came out and ordered me to be taken into her house.

Luckily for me, in the next house lived Mr. Alfred Cooper, the distinguished surgeon, who was on his doorstep at the moment, about to get into his brougham to go to the Jerusalem Lodge which was meeting that afternoon and to which my husband, one of its members, had gone.

Mr. Cooper ligatured the cut artery with a hair from the tail of my cab horse and then washed off the blood which covered my face. "Good gracious!" he exclaimed, "it's Mrs. Kendal. How extraordinary! I was just on the point of going to the Jerusalem Lodge where I know her husband is now."

That was why I was going to the theatre alone.

Someone suggested that my husband should be telegraphed for, exclaiming, "I hope she will live until he arrives."

Mr. Cooper forbade my being moved and I remained in that strange house for two days, when I was carried to my own home. He came himself every day and massaged my face. He was the kindest of men, and to him and him alone I owe the fact that I was restored to life.

As a result of her kindness I became a great friend of the kind creature who had taken me into her home. She, however, was very frightened when told I was an actress, for she was very religious. Six weeks later, when I returned to my work, my husband invited her to see the play at the St. James's Theatre and afterwards I introduced her to the Rev. Mr. Oxford whom she subsequently married.

I believe I revolutionised her outlook on life, and became a sort of Napoleon for her, as she seemed to be animated by the same kind of affection as that which he inspired.

Although no man is a hero to his valet, a woman may awaken the warmest feelings in her employees. In honour of my return to the St. James's, I found my room transformed into a bower of blossoms and a decorated bath chair, drawn by willing hands, was in waiting that I might not walk down the alley leading from King Street to the stage door.

The day it was announced I was to return to the theatre, I received an offer of no fewer than eleven carriages to take me there.

The one I chose was that of the Duke of Fife, as his kind offer was the first.

Years later, when I was acting in Brighton, I met the Duke with his two daughters on the Chain Pier.

As he came up to me he asked, "Are you going for a walk?"

"Yes," I replied, "I generally do before a *matinée*," and added, "I entreat you not to come again this week,

for you make me so nervous ; you know everything I am going to do in the play before I do it."

"But, Mrs. Kendal," replied the Duke, "we have taken the box for the week and we do like 'Miss Blossom'; so we go often to see her."

Our revival of "Clancarty" gave me the opportunity of proving that I was never insensitive to criticisms of my performance when I considered just fault was found with any part of my impersonation.

As I wrote at the time :

When the play was first produced, nearly all the criticisms on me were adverse ; in some cases the writers—gentlemen in whose opinion I have the greatest faith and for whose judgment I have the greatest admiration—pointed out most kindly to me where they thought my reading and my view of the character were wrong. First impressions had been made by a very beautiful and extremely talented woman (Miss Ada Cavendish), and I daresay to some extent militated against me—for first impressions always are the strongest and it is quite right they should be. I felt so instinctively that their criticisms were right, that I worked very, very hard at my part for weeks and weeks. I went on a long tour with it in the country, and tried it in many different ways, and eventually when I returned to reopen the St. James's Theatre in the winter season with it the criticisms were most generous and kind, and I was highly praised for the improvement I had made in my part. I cannot now call to mind every instance in which I have remembered the criticisms which have been written about me—where I instinctively felt that they were right and I was wrong, and I altered my part accordingly. I have great admiration for the writings of some theatrical critics who, whenever they have to say anything unkind, do so in a very gentlemanly way, and in a kindly spirit, and who, if they praise you, do so to the utmost of their power. This of course is in violent contrast with those critics who are led, more or less by personal feeling or like or dislike to the artist they are criticising, or with those people who make it a point of turning everything into ridicule, no matter what you may attempt from a high art point of view.

Mr. Hare did not care to play William III and entrusted the part to Mr. William Mackintosh, although my husband always regarded that character as the most effective in the play.

I remember his discussing it with a friend to whom he



MR. J. F. GRAHAM AS KING WILLIAM III. AND MRS. KENDAL
AS LADY CLANCARTY

remarked, "The king is undoubtedly the most effective part in the play, as kings invariably are, for the moment they appear they occupy the centre of the stage and every actor has to face him, thus turning his back on the audience whose gaze is concentrated on the central figure."

Our last production was "The Wife's Secret," which had been a great success both in England and America when acted by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean.

Its failure led to a series of revivals of our previous successes, but it was on "The Squire" on July 21st, 1888, that the final curtain fell on the Hare and Kendal management of the St. James's.

On that evening there was, naturally, a great deal of enthusiasm and the public would not leave the theatre until both gentlemen had made speeches.

Mr. Hare's reference to my husband and me was summed up in the words, "I must also publicly thank the partner whose loyal aid and help I have enjoyed for so many years ; Mrs. Kendal, whose talents have shed lustre and given vitality to so many of our productions, and a company . . ."

This was in striking contrast to the tribute paid to me by my husband who said, "It would be an affectation on my part were I to be restrained by any unworthy bashfulness without declaring that for our success we are principally indebted to Mrs. Kendal. With Mrs. Kendal we have done what we have done ; without her, we could, indeed, have done little. No one, I am sure, will more sincerely endorse this avowal than my late partner to whose uninterrupted friendship, hearty loyalty and generous co-operation during our entire connection I now gladly bear testimony."

CHAPTER IX

W. S. GILBERT

WHEN I joined the Haymarket, Mr. Buckstone was already an old man and in addition was very deaf, yet he never missed a cue, for he taught himself to know what the actors were saying by reading their lips.

The fact that he and the leading members of the company were not so young as they had been was vividly brought home to him by my brother Tom, who, at his request, adapted for him a French play to which he gave the name, "Progress."

My brother had already submitted his play, "Society," to Mr. Buckstone and it had been rather contemptuously turned down, as I have previously recorded.

When my brother read "Progress" to Mr. Buckstone, he exclaimed, "Good Lord, they're all old people in it."

"Certainly," replied my brother, "I've written the piece for your company."

Buckstone himself was a distinguished author at the time and a prolific one, judging by the number of titles appended to his name. Many of his original plays, however, were written by the simple expedient of translating them from the French. There was no international copyright law in those days and many English writers availed themselves of the plays of French authors for translation into English.

Gilbert himself derived from a French original, "Le Chapeau de Paille d'Italie," his play, "The Wedding

March," while Mr. Buckstone, having read a French play by Madame de Genlis entitled "Le Palais de la Vérité," gave it to Gilbert to turn into an English play. He did it under the literally translated title, "The Palace of Truth." It was the first of his plays in which my husband and I acted.

The play was written in blank verse, a form in which Gilbert was an adept, and he employed it again and again in his early work.

It was not a pronounced success, but it was helped to the favour of the public by Mr. S. Theyre Smith's "Uncle's Will," which was acted with it.

It was really my brother Tom who started Gilbert as a dramatist by introducing him to Mr. John Hollingshead, who wanted someone to adapt a French play for him.

The remuneration authors received in those days may be judged from an incident which happened to Gilbert.

He read a play to Buckstone. Buckstone liked it and asked him what his terms were for it.

"It has taken me three weeks to write it," said Gilbert. "Ten guineas a week would be a fair price to pay me. So shall we say thirty guineas."

Without any demur Mr. Buckstone accepted the terms and then said, "I'm a much older man than you, Mr. Gilbert. Will you let me give you a little advice?"

"Certainly," replied Gilbert.

"Well," returned Mr. Buckstone, "never sell so good a play for thirty guineas."

"I won't," said Gilbert. And he never did.

Years later, when in 1883 Miss Mary Anderson revived "Pygmalion and Galatea" at the Lyceum, all London crowded the theatre to see her, Gilbert's royalties amounted, it is said, to about two hundred pounds a week.

One peculiarity about Gilbert was that he never liked good-looking men. When we were going to produce "The Wicked World," Mr. Buckstone sent for me and told me that my husband was not suited for the part for which he had been cast and in that play it was an appalling part.

“ Well, Mr. Buckstone,” I replied, “ I do not play any part opposite to anyone but my husband, so I am discharged.”

“ Don’t talk nonsense,” exclaimed Mr. Buckstone, and he turned away.

How he settled it with Gilbert I never knew and I never asked, but my husband played the part.

One of the other characters was acted by Mr. A. R. Arnott, who made his first appearance in the play in company with my husband.

One night, to my amazement, when the cue came, I looked up to find Gilbert on the stage with my husband, and not the regular actor. When the curtain fell, I was told Mr. Arnott and another gentleman had been playing at boxing and his opponent had made Mr. Arnott’s face rather terrible to look upon, so he could not be seen in public.

For the nonce I turn myself into a dramatic critic and say that Gilbert, clever man, brilliant genius that he was, was the worst actor I have ever known or seen. I am not saying this behind his back now that he is not here to defend himself against that charge, for I told him so to his face that evening.

Whatever other qualities I may lack, I never lacked courage. My dear father always inculcated into me that a woman should have something of the courage of a man and a man should have something of the tenderness of a woman.

In the words of a much quoted song, which I heard years after,—when it came to acting, one can say of Gilbert, “ ’E don’t know where ’e are.” Had I known those words at the time I should certainly have sung them to him.

When I first played Galatea, I used to stand for the statue in exactly the same way as, later, Miss Mary Anderson did. Later on, however, a real statue was substituted. That distinguished sculptor, Mr. T. C. Brock, R.A., modelled the head and face from sittings I gave him and also adapted the pose from the one I took up and into which I fell whenever the action of the play did not compel me to change it. In this way, I was able to convey that Galatea’s newly

acquired muscles fell into the same contractions as those Pygmalion had sculptured in marble.

As I have often been asked to revive some memories of this part, let me say that the first movement I made to suggest the inflowing of life into her body was with my eyelids. I used to open them twice very slowly, and then flutter them. Then fixing them on Pygmalion, as more life seemed to take possession of my body, I moved my hands and arms towards him.

When Mrs. Charles Kean came to see the play, that sweet woman and distinguished actress told me that, in her opinion, the fluttering of my eyelids was most effective, and, following her advice, at the end of the play when Galatea returns to marble, it was my last action while I uttered the words, "Farewell, Pygmalion, farewell," the last farewell being long drawn out and my voice fading away into silence.

Mr. John Ruskin liked the play very much and came often to see it. On the first night Miss Caroline Hill, who was a very, very pretty woman and played Cynisca admirably, made an enormous success, her curse on Pygmalion when she calls down the wrath of Venus on him for what she believes is his faithlessness with Galatea being delivered with great poignancy and force.

When the curtain fell on the second act Gilbert came on to the stage beaming with delight and said, "My play is a great success."

I was standing by him and answered, "It's not over yet, Mr. Gilbert. There's another act to be played."

"Oh, but the gist of the play is over," he replied.

Such remarks are "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" which one has to encounter.

The one thing, however, which lives more vividly in my mind, for I shall never forget it, was that, at the end of the play, I received the greatest ovation, if I dare use such a word, that I ever had in my life.

Observation outside the theatre has always been, in my opinion, an essential part of every actor's education.

As Galatea I introduced an effect which had always fascinated me from the time I was old enough to be observant, viz. the expression of a baby the first time it looks into a mirror.

This look of wonder and surprise mingled with something of fright at not knowing what the vision means had been brought home to me by my own baby, and I determined to introduce it in the scene when Galatea sees her face reflected in a mirror.

At the first glimpse of myself I almost dropped the mirror, so frightened was I. Then curiosity got the better of my fear ; I took a second glance and my fright gave place to a smile of pleasure.

Gilbert paid me what I have always regarded as a great compliment when my husband and I wanted to play the piece during our summer tour while the Haymarket Theatre was closed. The compliment was contained in the following letter :

8, ESSEX VILLAS,
KENSINGTON,
4th January. 1872.

“ DEAR MRS. KENDAL,—

With respect to the country right of ‘Pygmalion’ for the towns that Mr. Buckstone does not propose to visit this year, I suggest the following terms :

100 guineas for the country rights of the piece in the United Kingdom until the end of your summer tour, say until the end of July 1872 except as regards the towns that Mr. Buckstone has already secured.

Of course, you should be at liberty to under-let the piece at your own terms while the copyright remains with you.

I shall be glad if you will let me have an early answer as I want to reply to the enclosed application.

I may add that my terms to Mr. English’s client will be two hundred guineas. But I am fully sensible to the dis-

advantage the piece would labour under if the part were played by any other actress than yourself.

Believe me to be, dear Mrs. Kendal,

Faithfully yours,

W. S. GILBERT."

Years later when we had been to America and certain of the newspapers had declared I was too old to undertake any further conquests, Dion Boucicault, who was then living in New York and was devoting himself to teaching the art of acting in which he was a past master, wrote a letter to my husband from which I extract the following paragraph :

103, WEST 55TH STREET,
NEW YORK.

MY DEAR KENDAL,—

If you return to New York and to Palmer's Theatre, do take into consideration producing "*Galatea*." I have good reason for this. The play has *never* been given here. Mary Anderson, Mrs. Langtry have gone through it, but I have seen Madge in it and so again tell you unreservedly it has never been played and her performance is a revelation.

After the play had run through the season in London, Mr. Buckstone took it on tour. On the first night we played it in Dublin, the first act went very quietly until just towards the close, when a woman in the pit shouted, as *Galatea* advanced affectionately to *Pygmalion*, "Whist, darlin', don't kiss him ; his wife's just gone out." It is unnecessary for me to add that her interruption was greeted with vociferous laughter by the quick-witted audience.

It left me in floods of tears, to be consoled by my husband, who thought I could never play the second act after the play had been turned into ridicule. Happily, however, the crowd recovered itself and took the rest of the sentiment in the proper spirit.

During that week the Orange Riots took place. One night while my husband and I were playing that famous one-act play, "*Uncle's Will*," some of the men began quarrelling and fighting in various parts of the house. It

would have ruined everything unless we could stop them. On the spur of the moment I went to the piano, struck a loud chord which arrested their attention for the moment and before they could resume their interruptions I began to sing the "Vale of Avoca," one of the best known of their own beloved Tom Moore's songs.

There was an instant hush over the house and for the rest of the evening everything went well. Such is the temperament of a highly strung excitable people.

We left Dublin to act in Belfast and there, again, the Orange Riots broke out. Mr. Buckstone was a very nervous man, and fearing what might happen in the evening when the house would be crammed to suffocation, he said on the Saturday, "We shall go home after the *matinée*." He refused absolutely to alter his determination and we left by the afternoon boat.

I stood on the deck, not at midnight, but in the blazing afternoon sun with my little daughter Margaret in my arms. She waved her baby hand at the soldiers and rather liked the noise.

It was in 1874 that Gilbert broke away from the blank verse of his fairy plays and wrote "Charity," in which, although I had a part for which I was far too young, one of the chief London critics was good enough to state that at the end of the third act I achieved a "triumph more stupendous and overwhelming than has ever been accorded an artist. The audience literally rose to greet her."

The fact that I was too young for the part handicapped me favourably in the audience's estimation, as it always does when a woman has to dress and appear on the stage much older than she really is. It has this added advantage, that the part gains in charm. My experience on the stage is contradicted by the life of to-day, for the older a woman is, the younger she tries to dress.

The scene of the last act was a drawing-room and in designing it, Gilbert, who was as particular in the arrangement and furnishing of his scenes as in the acting of his

characters, insisted that round the frieze of the room there should be a decoration of blue and white china plates, so the property man furnished plates of papier-maché, beautifully painted, which looked exactly like the real thing.

One night, early in the run, one of the plates fell on to the stage. Instead of breaking, as china would have done, it fell on its edge and proceeded, wheel-like, to roll down the stage and eventually fell into the pit which in those days occupied the whole floor of the house, for there were no stalls.

As might be expected the audience roared with laughter. The scene was a highly emotional one between Mr. Chippendale and me. He had to say, "Faith, Hope and Charity," and I had to reply, "And the greatest of these is Charity."

The laughter of the audience affected us on the stage. Mr. Chippendale tried to maintain a serious face, but failed and burst out laughing too.

There is nothing more contagious than laughter at a contretemps on the stage. Catching the disorder from him, I began to laugh. We laughed so much that the curtain had to be lowered without my speaking the tag.

It was unfortunate that Gilbert had come that very night to see how the play was getting on. As soon as the curtain fell, he came on to the stage and abused me roundly for ruining the scene. His tirade must have lasted quite ten minutes and, as my gravity had already been upset, he did not produce the effect he desired.

"It's unfortunate," I said, "that you were in front to-night. If you want to see the effect of the scene come next week when I shall have recovered from the effects of to-night."

The last of Gilbert's poetical plays in which my husband and I acted, if I except his "Sweethearts," which Queen Victoria commanded at Osborne, was "Broken Hearts," when my husband was Mr. Hare's silent partner at the Court.

Mr. Hare did not act in it, but engaged Mr. G. W. Anson to play the only other man's part than that acted by my husband in it. Mr. Hare contented himself with directing the

production and he managed the "water works" of the little fountain which plays a prominent part in the production.

One day, during a rehearsal of this play, Mr. Hare and Gilbert had a slight controversy. Perhaps slight is the wrong adjective, for the upshot of it was that the rehearsal was dismissed. They both left the theatre locked in their "Sunday tempers."

At that time, beneath the Court Theatre there was a little railway station with a platform about six feet wide and a little train used to puff in and puff out of it.

Up and down the narrow platform Gilbert and Hare tramped, each with a settled frown upon his brow and each ignoring the other as they passed, almost brushing shoulders. The only notice they took of the other was to sniff as "they passed by."

At length the little train puffed in. Both of them made for the same door which a passenger had opened in order to alight. Naturally, as the door was too narrow to admit them both at the same time, neither could get in. Suddenly, Gilbert's strong sense of humour came to the rescue of the absurd situation. He burst out laughing.

Hare looked at him, and in his turn burst out laughing. Each took a step back from the train and at the same time each held out his hand to the other. They shook hands warmly and together they returned to the theatre.

As they were coming in at the stage door, I arrived in the hall on the point of going out. "We've come back to rehearsal," they both exclaimed at the same time.

"Oh, have you," I said, quite complacently. "I think everybody's gone. You've been some time making up your minds and at the present moment I'm going home."

I left them both gazing in astonishment at me.

What disgusting women we leading ladies are!

But, oh, how necessary it is to be like that sometimes.

Hare and W. S. Gilbert, to the wonder and amazement of my early married life, were both in the habit of losing their tempers every minute and recovering them in a half a

minute. I used to call them "The Rapids," after I had been to America and seen the real thing at Niagara.

When Gilbert did not like anybody he could be very rude to him. He not only could be, but he was.

So rude was he that I have been told on very excellent authority that men constantly did not speak to him. He himself was aware of his peculiar proclivity, for, on one occasion, invited to a stag dinner, he exclaimed in astonishment on entering the room, "A dozen men and I'm on terms with them all!"

During the run of "All For Her," which drew London in consequence of Mr. John Clayton's success, Mr. Hare had a birthday and gave a party at Skindle's Hotel, Maidenhead.

Among the guests was Mr.—Sir—(bother these titles, they do get in one's way)—W. S. Gilbert, for he and Lady Gilbert had been great friends of Mr. Hare.

Clayton had been out of the bill for a night or two through indisposition, and while he was absent Gilbert had gone to the theatre.

"I'm sorry I was absent the night you came to see the play," said Clayton.

"Were you?" replied Gilbert. "I didn't miss you."

In spite of Gilbert's quickness of temper, he had one quality which exalted him in my eyes in addition to his genius. This quality was his generosity.

This is a vivid example of it.

One morning I went to rehearsal, bent on begging for one of the poor members of our cloth who had fallen on evil days.

Something went wrong and Gilbert flew into one of his most towering rages.

When he was quite calm again I went to him and told him what I wanted. Like most other men at that time, he carried his gold sovereigns in one of his trouser pockets and his loose silver in the other. Without a word, he put his two hands into his pockets and drew out a handful of silver and a handful of gold.

"Take what you want," was all he said, holding out both hands to me.

"I shall," I said, "and you will have to pay for your temper this morning. I think I like this hand of yours with the gold in it better than the other. I'll take what I want from this side."

Before I had finished speaking he had recovered his sense of humour and he was more than generous to my poor friend.

In addition to his appearance in "The Wicked World," Gilbert also acted the two men's part in "Broken Hearts," on different occasions. The first time was at a special matinée in which Mrs. Bernard Beere acted Lady Hilda, the part I originally played, and Miss Marion Terry played the Lady Vavir which had been "created," as they say in France, by Miss Hollingshead.

On this occasion, it was again an accident which compelled him to take up the part at short notice.

The late Mr. Kyrle Bellew, that very handsome and talented actor, was cast for Prince Florian. At that time he was acting a melodrama in which during one scene he was on a raft in a raging sea during a storm.

The evening before the matinée something went wrong with the stage machinery ; he was hurled off the raft on to the stage and his chin was cut to the bone. It left a scar which he carried to the grave.

There was no understudy, so Mr. Gilbert went on and spoke the lines. Anyone who was at that performance will substantiate my statement with regard to his acting.

Later, at a special performance, he played Moustas, the deformed dwarf, a part demanding considerable tragic intensity.

I did not see it. I only heard of it.

Strange as it may seem, the words faded from his memory as the following incident will show.

Soon after Miss Julia Neilson first went on the stage—what a beautiful girl she was !—she was engaged by Mr. F. H. Macklin, in partnership with Gilbert, for a short tour in which she played among other pieces, "Pygmalion and

Galatea," "Sweethearts," and "Broken Hearts," the last two forming one bill.

The actor engaged for the leading character parts found himself unable to be perfect in the lines of Moustas for the first performance of "Broken Hearts" in Manchester and asked Mr. Gilbert to play the part, as he had already done so.

He acquiesced readily enough, for the public's lack of appreciation of "Broken Hearts" weighed heavily upon him and he was anxious to give it another chance of recognition.

Unhappily, at the rehearsal on the morning of the day of the performance he found he could not recover the words. In their dilemma, Mr. Macklin recalled that a young actor friend of his had recently made a success in London by reciting the whole play. They telegraphed to him and asked if he could play the part that evening.

He caught, with less than a minute to spare, the only train which would take him to Manchester in time for the performance.

So anxious was Mr. Gilbert that he was waiting at the station when the train came in. Even so, the order of the two plays had to be reversed so as to give the actor time to dress and make-up, Mr. Gilbert himself helping the actor, who spoke every word of the part without missing a syllable and gained the warm encomium of the author.

Although I have criticised Gilbert adversely as an actor, I must in equal justice take off my hat,—I should say my bonnet,—to him as a stage manager, that functionary who is now called the "producer" but whom I often call the *reducer*.

Gilbert knew exactly what he wanted his actors to do and could tell them and even show them how to do it. That, of course, requires the possession of qualities quite different from those of the actor.

My friend, William Shakespeare, upon whom I fall back on every conceivable occasion to help me out with his words, for his genius always describes our thoughts, realised

this quality when he made Portia say, "If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches and poor men's cottages princes' palaces."

This same quality was also recognised by the authors of that now classical French play, "Adrienne Le Couvreur," who was taught by the prompter of the Théâtre Français, Michonnet. He was evidently a very poor actor and the authors made one of her admirers say, "How comes it, M. Michonnet, that you who are so great a teacher can be——"

"So bad an actor," replied the old man, finishing the sentence with a pathetic smile.

It's very easy, say I.

After our association with the Gilbert plays came to an end there was a period of something like fifteen to twenty years during which I do not think we ever spoke to him or even saw him.

One day, as I was driving to the Junior Carlton Club, for it was my custom to call there for my husband to bring him home to dinner, a four-wheel cab was standing in front of the building, so that the coachman could not drive close to the pavement.

I noticed that the cabman and a porter of the club were struggling to get the occupant of the cab out of it.

I jumped out of the victoria and said to the cabman, "Give me the gentleman's sticks and his hat and you and the porter will then be able to get him out."

They did and they took him up the few steps leading to the door, with me following with his hat and sticks.

They placed him on a chair in the hall and I stood by waiting until he had recovered his breath after the exertion to which he had been subjected.

On looking into his face, I, of course, recognised at once who it was.

"Gilbert," I exclaimed.

"You!" he replied, in astonishment.

"Yes, why not!" I answered.

At that moment my husband came out of the billiard-room and we drove home.

Probably a year elapsed when our mutual friend Mrs. Seymour Trower, who had taken a new house in Bryanston Square, invited my husband and me to a house-warming party which she said was to be made up of old friends.

We had scarcely entered the drawing-room when the butler announced, "Sir Schwenck and Lady Gilbert."

Directly he saw me, Gilbert came over to where I was standing and with a great deal of good humour lighting up his face said, "I *am* glad to see you. I have never thanked you for having helped me up the steps of the Junior Carlton that afternoon."

He sat down and from his conversation and his manner he might have been my long-lost brother. He said all sorts of nice things which it would never do for me to repeat.

When dinner was announced, I went down with Sir Douglas Straight. Immediately opposite to me sat Gilbert, who never addressed either of the ladies between whom he sat, but spoke across the table to me, to the utter astonishment of many of the other guests who knew we had not spoken for years.

After dinner, when the men came up to the drawing-room, he came and sat by my side and told me what a pleasure it was to talk to me about our past and his plays in which I had acted. He was his own most agreeable, amusing and friendly self, much to my amazement.

As I have written, my husband was in the habit of going to the Junior Carlton Club every afternoon to play his game of billiards and he returned with me at a quarter to seven in order to dress for dinner.

The next day something prevented me calling at the Club, but the instant after I had heard my husband's stick in the stand in the hall I heard him cry, "Madge, come down ; I've something to tell you."

When I went into his room, he said he had not sat down

to the lunch-table three minutes before Gilbert came up to him and said, "Kendal, can I lunch at your table?"

"You have been a member of this club for twenty years," said my husband, "and can lunch at any table you like. I believe that is one of the rules of the Club."

"Gilbert," continued my husband, "sat down and talked of everything,—of you and your brother Tom who introduced him to John Hare !

"He was witty ; he was full of spirits ; he ate an enormous lunch, he flattered you and he flattered me—which astonished me so much that I could not eat mine.

"After lunch, he sat and talked for a time, then he looked at his watch and said, 'I must be off, as I have an appointment to teach a young lady to swim.' He went away, but came back and shook hands with me twice, in the most cordial manner.

"Now, Madge, what do you think of that?"

"I can quite understand it ; he's twenty years older than he was when he quarrelled with us. He knows he was wrong ; he has learnt his experience and profited by it. He is a complex, curious character, but once people have looked inside the Pandora's box which we all have been given, they become changed."

So it was with him, and I repeated how glad I was that he had sought out my husband to make friends with him.

Imagine my despair on the following morning when, on coming down to breakfast, as I always did before my husband, the first lines I saw on opening the daily papers was the announcement of Gilbert's death.

I gathered all the papers together and put them into a drawer.

My husband, coming down to breakfast, naturally missed his favourite morning paper and I was called to tell him I had put them away. Then I had to break the terrible news to him, for I knew how great a shock it would be.

About three weeks later, I went into my husband's study

and found an enormous fire burning in the grate and him sitting at his writing-table surrounded with letters.

"What on earth are you doing?" I asked.

"I am burning all Gilbert's acrimonious letters," he replied. "I can only remember his last day with me, and I'm so glad of it."

About a year later, a gentleman named Grey wrote and said he was writing Gilbert's life and asked if my husband would send him any letters he or I had received from Gilbert.

We replied, "We have nothing to send you."

I think,—I am sure,—that the only letters of his I possess are those to which I have referred previously.

There is no doubt that we can apply the word genius to W. S. Gilbert and with reason. His versatility was marvellous and through it all he struck the note of making the fairies human to their waists.

He loved the theatre. He was happy in it. Rehearsals were the breath of his nostrils. He was full of ideas, some of them impossible,—utterly impossible,—*but* he *was* a genius. And, please remember, genius is not a word which comes readily from my lips or my pen. In all my long life and among the large number of men and women I have known, there are not altogether more than two or three to whom I would or could apply that word.

To Gilbert's memory I repeat his own words which Zeolide, in "The Palace of Truth," says in a calm and friendly tone, "I love you, Philamir; be satisfied."

CHAPTER X

THE SOCIAL SCIENCE CONGRESS

ON September 23rd, 1884, I read a paper on the Drama at the Congress of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science at Birmingham. It was an unprecedented thing for a woman to do in those days. If not unprecedented, it certainly was most unusual for an actor to address the Social Science Congress at all.

The way it came about was this.

At that time my husband and I used to be constant visitors of the Marchioness of Waterford. Regularly, on Sundays, she gave large luncheon-parties at which she served a wonderful curry which was so noted that her guests flocked to eat it. Among the many interesting people whom she gathered around her on these occasions was Sir Richard Temple, next to whom, one day, I sat. After having made one or two of my usual bad jokes, he said to me, "Why don't you come here to dinner sometimes? I always think Lady Waterford's dinners dull, but she does have cheery parties on Sunday for lunch and all her witty sons—when they talk."

"I am never able to go out to dinner," I replied.

"If you can go out to lunch, why not to dinner?" asked Sir Richard. "Don't you ever eat it?"

"No," I said, "except at four o'clock."

"Four o'clock," he repeated with amazement. "You excite my curiosity. Why eat dinner at four?"

"Because I'm obliged to."

"Obliged to?" he asked, more amazed than ever "What's your name."

"Grimston," I answered, for in society my husband and I invariably used his family rather than our professional name.

"Well, what do you do that you can't get out to dinner?"

"I walk on the stage."

"I don't understand what you mean by 'walk on the stage.'"

"I try to be an actress."

"Where?"

"At the St. James's Theatre, King Street."

"I seldom go to the theatre, but I think I should like to see what you can do."

"If you go, you will also see what my husband can do. There he is, on Lady Waterford's right."

"Why, that is Kendal," he said. "I know him, of course, at the Beefsteak Club."

The following evening Sir Richard Temple was in the private box close to the stage.

At the end of the play he sent his card round and said he would like to speak to my husband, who sent for me. "You must come and speak about your profession at the Social Science Congress," he said. "It has never been spoken of since I've been president."

I hesitated a good deal before I accepted the invitation. This is the paper I read.

"In dealing with the Drama within the necessarily brief limits of a Social Science Association paper, the great difficulty is to decide from what point of view so large a subject is to be treated. That it should have a place in your discussions seems appropriate enough, for assuredly there never was a time when the Theatre was more popular, or so much a topic of conversation, as now. The English people are indeed rapidly becoming alive to the fact that the 'progress and culture of a nation depend upon its diversions as well as upon its occupations,' and as a matter of consequence the dramatic art is receiving an unprece-

dented meed of recognition. It appears to me, therefore, that the most useful thing for me to do to-day will be to glance for a few moments at the difference in the condition of the Drama in its earliest days and now, and to consider in what ways it has improved, in what deteriorated. That it has in many ways improved every playgoer of intelligence must admit ; that it has in some ways deteriorated those who are closely associated with it are forced to allow.

It is an easy and a pleasant task to speak of its improvements. I believe—nay, I know—that there still exist very worthy but self-constituted critics who speak with shake of head and regretful sigh of what are called the ‘ palmy days ’ of the Drama. That grand actors and consummate actresses lived in bygone days is a matter beyond all dispute ; and indeed, when one comes to consider the conditions under which they were compelled to follow their art, it seems almost impossible to speak too highly of the genius which enabled them indelibly to stamp their names upon the age in which they lived, and which will cause them to be honourably, nay, gloriously, remembered in ages yet to come. But surely I am justified in saying that the playgoer of to-day possesses advantages far and away above those which his forefathers enjoyed. Let us compare for a moment the playhouses of which we read with those with which we are familiar.

In the old days the utmost disorder was allowed to exist in the half-lighted auditorium. Eating and drinking were freely indulged in ; smoking was permitted ; wine, spirits and tobacco were hawked about ; card-playing was resorted to between the acts ; the most distinguished among the audience were allowed to walk and sit on the stage, and to converse with the performers. It was no disgrace in those days for gentlemen of good social position to be seen tipsy at the play, and of course drunken brawls and disgraceful quarrels were of frequent occurrence.

The entertainment provided on the stage was on a level with the intellect of the audience, and the players were

looked upon as 'rogues and vagabonds.' No wonder that the Drama got a bad name, or that people with a puritanical turn of mind regarded it with dismay.

Of course all this is going back a very long way, and matters began by degrees to improve ; but I venture to say that it was not until the present generation that correctness in costume, fidelity in scene-painting, and attention to every little detail connected with the action, came to be looked upon as absolutely essential to the proper production of a play.

Nowadays, indeed, that which is technically known as the 'staging' of a play is in itself a work of true art, and in its own way gives rise to as much thought and care as the author has for his dialogue or the actor for his part. It has been objected lately that too much attention is apt to be given to scenery, furniture, and accessories, and that there is a danger of the Drama suffering from over-elaboration in this direction. In plain English, this means a thing may be too well done ; and it seems hard to subscribe to such a theory. Our forefathers, you will remember, were content with a background for their plays, on which the name of the place supposed to be represented was written up, such as 'This is Thebes,' or 'This is a forest,' or sometimes even this trouble was not taken and the actors had to inform the audience where the action of the piece lay.

Our scene is Rhodes

is the brilliant opening line given to an actor in an old drama.

These crude arrangements gave way to the introduction of scenery, but it was a long time before anything like correctness was attempted, and we can most of us remember the days when there was no complaint of the thing being 'overdone.'

Can it be 'overdone' ? If a scene is to be represented at all, can it be given with too much truth or attention to detail ? Of course, lack of judgment spoils everything, and it is very likely that mistakes in this direction have

given rise to the complaint. It is useless to lavish mere money on a scene. If the interior of a peasant's cottage is to be represented much expenditure on the furniture would be ridiculous ; but surely the artistic care that reproduces the humble home of the labourer, down to such minute details as, say, the ' sampler ' stitched in silk which his wife had worked when a girl at the village school, and which now decorates his walls, is a thing to be admired.

Again, if the scene is a landscape, ought it not to be made as true to lovely nature as the resources of art will allow ? Or if it is a room in a palace, can it be too beautifully given ? If the surroundings and minutæ of such scenes are correct and in good taste they must add not only to the enjoyment but to the *education* of an audience ; for it may be reasonably supposed that the frequenters of the less expensive seats in a theatre have not many opportunities of becoming familiar with the interiors of palaces ; and it is certain that the jaded City clerk, who seeks a little recreation at the play, does not see too much of landscape, nor has he a very intimate acquaintance with the indescribable attractions of an English villager's home. Perhaps it would be well for those who are disposed to be satirical concerning what they call ' over-attention to detail ' and ' over-elaboration ' to give a thought to this side of the question before airing their opinions. It may then, I think, be conceded that in matters of scenery the improvements are not only great but remarkable.

The comfort of the audience, too—is not that considered nowadays as it was never considered before ? For obvious reasons I do not often form one of an audience myself, but I should certainly think that good light, attention to warmth and ventilation, soft cushions, ample room, good music, and, above all, cleanliness, are things to be appreciated and to be added to our list of improvements.

And while advances in this respect have been made before the curtain, equally great ones have taken place behind it, and actors and actresses are at last surrounded by the con-

veniences and comforts which gentlemen and ladies have a right to expect. For the improvements—the great improvements—that have been made in this way honour should be given where honour is due. It was the management of the Prince of Wales's Theatre that, some seventeen years ago, first paid attention to the comfort of the artists it engaged and made the theatre behind the scenes what it now is. This fact should be recorded, because praise is too often given to those who have only followed a good example.

We have more play-writers, too, than of old ; and although a cry is constantly going up that there is a dearth of good dramatists, it is a matter of fact that much excellent modern literary work has been, and is, associated with the Stage.

It is to be feared that the playwright of to-day is hardly appreciated as he should be. His work is subject to keen and universal criticism ; for it is a curious fact that, whereas few would venture to criticise books, poems, or paintings without some little special knowledge, everyone thinks he has a right to pronounce judgment on a stage-play, and is convinced that that judgment is infallible. And, again, the dramatist runs the risk of being misinterpreted, and consequently misunderstood. His work, moreover, does not find its place on the library shelf, and is seldom read ; but the improved condition of the Theatre has made the most famous literary men of the day anxious to identify their names with it ; and let us hope that this desire will increase and bring forth good fruit as matters still further improve.

But perhaps the most remarkable change that has come over the condition of the Drama is the fact that there is at last a recognised social position for the professional player. Formerly actors formed a little body to themselves. The Theatrical Profession was considered outside, if not beneath, all others, and was regarded with something like contempt. It was a wrong, a cruel and an absurd state of things, for even then the Theatre was popular, and was doing good work. Perhaps you may remember Garrick's famous reply to the bishop who told him that he could not

understand why his theatre was always full while his church was always empty. 'I think, my Lord,' said Garrick, 'it is because I deal with fiction as though it were a truth, while you preach the truth as though it were a fiction.' Members of all the other professions were glad enough to come and amuse themselves with the outcome of the actor's genius ; his ability was recognised ; it was, as it is now, the subject of universal conversation and of much newspaper comment ; but the door of 'society' was closed to him.

Now all that is altered.

The Theatrical Profession is acknowledged to be a high and important one, and the society of the intelligent and cultivated actor is eagerly sought after. Just at present, indeed, the new state of things, having become universally known and recognised, has become also a little embarrassing.

One is always hearing or reading in the papers that the professions are 'overstocked'—that there are too many clergymen, too many lawyers, too many doctors—and the fact that the terms of actor and gentleman may now be regarded as synonymous seems to have sent the 'overdraft' of all these other professions head-long on to the stage.

How many younger sons of well-born but not too well-to-do parents have hailed the present social position of the actor with delight ! How many educated girls, finding themselves, through force of circumstances, suddenly compelled to face the world on their own account, have turned with a sigh of relief from the prospect of the stereotyped position of 'companion' or 'governess' to the vista that an honourable connection with the Stage holds out to them ! From these, and from other sources, the Theatrical Profession also runs the risk of becoming 'overstocked.'

These young aspirants rush to the Stage as to a promised land. The would-be actors congratulate themselves on the fact that there are no 'stiff' examinations to pass ; they complacently regard their handsome young faces in the looking-glass ; they contemplate with satisfaction the latest

efforts of their West End tailors, and think themselves on the high-road to fame and fortune.

A young man of this stamp not long ago called upon a London manager, sent in his card, and, being admitted to his presence, informed him that he had made up his mind to 'go on the stage,' and was prepared to accept an engagement. The manager, not unnaturally, asked some questions as to his qualifications for the career which he proposed for himself. 'Had he any experience as an actor? Had he studied the dramatic art?' 'No,' was the reply, 'but he had decided to "go on the stage," and all that he wanted was an engagement.' The manager led him to the door and, returning his card, pointed to a building on the opposite side of the street. 'That,' said he, 'is a bank; go and present yourself there. Say that, without knowing anything about the business, you have made up your mind to be a banker's clerk, and ask for a situation. If you succeed in getting one, come back here, and I will engage you as an actor.' The young gentleman took his departure, but *he did not return!*

The would-be actresses are more diffident, and are certainly more disposed to devote heart and soul to their work; but neither the one nor the other has the slightest idea of the amount of study, of labour, and of devotion to the art—to say nothing of natural aptitude—that is necessary for success.

Another advance that may be claimed for the Drama in these days of its improvement is its influence as a teacher—for a teacher it always has been, and ever will be.

Temperaments differ everywhere, and one of the first things that a boy or girl has to find out is what will exercise the greatest influence over his or her nature. There are many young people who are perfectly content and happy with the amusements that are afforded by study, by a happy home life, and by pleasant social intercourse; but there are also many who require a little more than this, and who can only show what is best in their undeveloped natures

under the influence of an appeal to their imaginations. These rush to the Drama as the thirsty wayfarer rushes to the cooling brook.

How important it is, therefore, that the draught should be pure, that the refreshment should be really wholesome and useful ! It is quite certain that many hundreds—nay, thousands—of people have been influenced for good or for evil by what they have seen portrayed upon the stage. Those who go to the theatre with the capability of weeping over scenes in which honest self-sacrifice is depicted ; of being aroused to enthusiasm over the success of manly effort or womanly devotion ; or of feeling genuine contempt for the portrayal of meanness, treachery, and snobbery, will come away from a good play, well acted, having learnt a lesson and gained an experience that will probably be remembered with advantage throughout the remainder of their lives. A pure Stage is likely to be surrounded by a pure people, and its influence from this point of view can hardly be overestimated.

It is worth while here, perhaps, to look upon the influence that the Dramatic Art has upon those most intimately associated with it. The playing of many parts naturally gives to the actor and actress a curious insight into the sentiments and passions that sway and bias human nature. The earnest actor, who has heart and soul in his work, and conscientiously studies the various parts he is called upon to play, is compelled to think, more than the mere man of business, of human strength, and weakness, of hate and love, of joy and sorrow ; for in their turn he has to portray them all, and, to judge by results, the effect upon his nature is to make him very charitable.

Where, I may safely ask, is charity more openly or more cheerfully practised than among the members of the Theatrical Profession ? I do not allude to mere almsgiving—the readiness with which an actor will help a comrade who has fallen by the way has become proverbial—but to charity of a very different and more valuable kind.

Clergymen preach forgiveness ; but they do not welcome among their own body men whose names are identified with a past story, but who would gladly do useful work in a peaceful future. Lawyers have to do with justice ; but they look with wary eye on those who had once tripped, and conscientiously warn their clients to have nothing to do with such easily misled and consequently dangerous creatures. Doctors practise the healing art ; but their nostrums are for broken bones and bodily hurts : they have no salve for the weary mind or the lacerated heart.

The Theatrical Profession, on the other hand, offers chances to all men and women, no matter what their past has been ; and it is in this way that I maintain it to be a more charitable one than any other. A sad and undeserved consequence of this is that actors are liable to suffer as a body for the very charities they so unselfishly practise, for they give the outside world opportunities for indulging in that scandal about the Stage which apparently forms one of its chief delights. The puritanical-minded point to some too well-known ‘ backslider ’ who is endeavouring to earn a living in a theatre, lift up their pious hands in horror, and condemn the whole profession. It would be well, indeed, if these worthy people would take the trouble to look a little further into the matter and ascertain how cruelly unjust such condemnation is.

In all these things—and if time permitted I could mention many more—the Drama, it may be safely maintained, has not only held its ground but improved. But I am now quite half-way through the time allotted by the Social Science Association for my paper, and I must turn to the other side of the question, and tell you in what ways the Drama of the present day has deteriorated and, unless actors and actresses will be true to themselves and the honourable profession that they follow, is likely still further to deteriorate.

No true lover of the Dramatic Art can look with satisfaction on the many ways in which it is now advertised. Neither the painter nor the poet thinks it advisable to fill

the columns of the daily papers with the monotonous repetition of what this or that critic has said of his work, or to keep his name constantly, and with wearisome persistency, before the public. The extent to which some carry out this system, and the pains taken over it, is simply beyond all description. An insatiable thirst for newspaper paragraphs is always tormenting them, and in every action of their lives the thought of 'How will that advertise me?' or 'How can I use this as an advertisement?' is predominant. With people thus constituted even affliction is turned to what they consider profitable account, and at a dull period an illness is regarded as a positive boon.

This absurd mania seems to be in a great measure, I am sorry to say, peculiar to the members of the Theatrical Profession, and it assuredly does not add to their dignity. It is done in manifold ways—in what are known as 'receptions' at theatres, in railway station 'demonstrations,' by photography, and by speech-making, and one and all are degrading to the Drama. As a cloak for incapability such means may be excusable, but true art in every branch advertises itself. Advertising nowadays is an art, but it is *not* the art of acting.

This state of things has given rise to a flippant and what may be termed 'personal' style of theatrical journalism which is greatly to be deplored, and should certainly be discouraged. The so-called theatrical papers, in which the leading artists of the Stage are alluded to by their Christian names, and where insolent and generally untrue gossip and tittle-tattle take the place of honest criticism, are absolutely debasing to the profession. The unfortunate outcome of all this is, that the artist's capabilities or, more properly speaking, 'popularity,' is too often gauged by the amount of publicity that is given to every little action of his or her life. An unthinking section of the public is hungry for news of this description and incompetent but 'knowing' actors and their managers take advantage of it.

Another way in which the Drama has certainly deterior-

ated is the style of play that now attracts popular audiences. Our forefathers could laugh heartily over a good farce, but the staple fare of the evening had to be the serious or poetical Drama, in which some good moral would be pointed out, and literary merit would be looked for and found. At the present time, however, audiences enjoy a whole evening of farce, and farce of a very remarkable nature. What, in reality, can be a more painful spectacle than that of an innocent and unsuspecting wife being hoodwinked and deceived by a graceless and profligate husband? Years ago it would have formed the groundwork of a very pathetic play, if not of a tragedy; but now it is never-failing source of delight to the lover of elongated farce; and the greater the innocence of the wife, and the more outrageous the misconduct of the husband, the louder are the shrieks of laughter with which their misunderstandings are received.

For this, alas! we have to thank our French friends; and the 'suggestiveness' which pervades the dialogue of too many modern plays is another foreign importation that might very well be spared. That most of the old plays were indelicate is a matter of fact, but they were a reflection of the times in which they were produced. In those days a spade was called a spade, and plain speaking was not only tolerated but expected. That disagreeable 'suggestion' should have taken the place of downright coarseness is a bad sign of the taste of the modern playgoer. Of course there are very clever and very amusing pieces of this order, but their success has given rise to a host of vulgar and clumsy imitations which, while attracting audiences, certainly do no credit to the English Stage.

In what is known as burlesque, too, the modern Theatre has decidedly deteriorated. Genuine travesty and pantomime are distinct and recognised branches of the Dramatic Art; but although some good burlesque pieces, in which witty authors and clever actors unite to create a hearty, wholesome, and good-humoured laugh, are happily pro-

duced from time to time, the so-called burlesque with which the modern playgoer is familiar, and which, it must be owned, he seems to enjoy, is not a very high-toned entertainment. I am sure that if fanciful children were taken to these pieces, it would be a real source of sorrow to them to see such trusted friends as 'Ali Baba,' 'Aladdin,' 'Robin Hood,' 'Robinson Crusoe,' 'Sinbad the Sailor,' and a host of others, treated so badly.

No one in his senses can blame managers or actors for catering for this section of the playgoing public. A demand naturally induces a supply, and if Dramatic Art has deteriorated in this direction, the public, and not the profession, is to blame.

I do not think that the Press of the present day does all that it might do for the true welfare of the Drama. Existing critics generally rush into extremes, and either over-praise or too cruelly condemn. The public, as a matter of course, turns to the newspapers for information. And how can any judgment be formed when either indiscriminate praise or unqualified abuse is given to almost every new piece that is brought out? Criticism, if it is to be worth anything, should surely be 'criticism'; but nowadays the writing of a picturesque article, replete with eulogy or the reverse, seems to be the aim of the theatrical reviewer.

Of course the influence of the Press upon the Stage is very powerful, but it will cease to be so if playgoers find that their mentors, the critics, are not trustworthy guides. The public, after all, must decide the fate of a new play. If it be bad the Englishman of to-day will not declare that it is good because the newspapers have told him so. He will be disappointed, he will be bored, he will tell his friends, and the bad piece will fail to draw audiences.

If, on the other hand, the play is a good one which has been condemned by the Press, it will quicken the pulse and stir the heart of an audience in spite of adverse criticism; the report that it contains the true ring will go about, and success must follow. In a word, though the Press can do

very much to further the interests of the Stage, it is powerless to kill good work, and it cannot galvanise that which is invertebrate into life. Too many notices are, it is to be feared, written 'to order,' and the writer who has declined to praise an unsuccessful actor has been known to lose his post ; but let us hope that this unjust state of affairs, together with the 'chicken and champagne,' of which we have heard so much, is a thing of the past.

And here, I think, attention may be suitably called to a duty that the public undoubtedly owes to itself in this matter of criticism, and that is, that it should judge for itself, and not pin a blind faith on all that is told. It is too true that if playgoers are told that a thing is good they are quite prepared to accept it as such, without taking the trouble to find out whether they have been rightly or wrongly informed. Thus many plays and many actors and actresses are accepted and praised because the critics have declared them to be good. The fact is, the public does not judge for itself, but is influenced and led by 'fashion.'

Actors nowadays seem to be judged by everything except by the art they follow, and I maintain that this state of things is peculiar to the Theatrical Profession. Clergymen become popular because they preach good sermons ; lawyers have good practices because they advise their clients well ; doctors increase the number of their patients in proportion to their professional skill ; surely, then, actors should be successful and popular in accordance with the talent with which they act. But acting seems to have something akin to 'Parr's Life Pills' and 'Holloway's Ointment.' By advertising these commodities large fortunes were made, and it is the actor who lets the public know, through the newspapers, everything that he does, from the entertainments that he gives to his friends and admirers, down to the goose that he sends his gasman at Christmas, that seems to get the largest following. 'Bunkum' of this description has of late years been practised to an extent which is absolutely nauseating ; and all this

proves that there is 'something rotten in the state of Denmark.'

A complaint is constantly being made that the moral tone of the Drama of the present day is not so high as it undoubtedly should be ; but for this playgoers are to blame, for they run after notoriety, and notoriety alone. This may seem a strong accusation, but is it not true ? When men and women have done wrong and take to the Stage, is it not a fact that (provided the wrong-doing has been made sufficiently public) brisk business may be expected at the booking-office ? This, I maintain, never was in the old days, and proves to-day the degradation of our Stage.

Some critics hold that men and women cannot properly act noble and virtuous characters unless they themselves have led spotless lives. I do not go so far as this, but I do maintain that it is pleasanter to think that when the curtain has fallen and the actor or actress is at home, he or she leads, or is capable of leading, the same kind of life the representation of which has moved an audience to sympathetic tears ; and certainly it can be no drawback if, while admiring the artist, the playgoer can at the same time respect the man or woman.

Surely, then, it is more than a necessity that actors and actresses of position, who have the true interest of their noble art in view, should make their lives an example to those with whom they are associated, and to those who are to come after them. By this means, and by this means only, can the Theatrical Profession expect to maintain its dignity and to secure the high position it should hold in the estimation of the public. It behoves actors and actresses of every degree, while cultivating their talents to elevate and amuse, to lead such lives that those who have regarded the Stage with a suspicious eye will at last give it its proper place in the world of Art.

Time will not allow me to say more. The Drama has an interesting, nay, to some of us a fascinating Past. It rests

with those who make it a profession, and the ever-increasing public that supports it, to secure for it a useful, an elevating, and a glorious Future."

The conclusion of my address was marked by loud applause and a very graceful speech by Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, afterwards Lord Eversley, in proposing a vote of thanks to me.

Several of the daily papers were very appreciative and even laudatory in their criticism, but the eulogy was by no means unanimous. Indeed, the address, so carefully planned, so discreetly worded as not to give offence, was actually twisted from its purpose by certain members of the Press, witness the following statement :

I do not think that the members of the theatrical profession, or indeed any persons concerned in the inner life of the theatrical world, would agree with Mr. Shaw-Lefevre that Mrs. Kendal in her recent address had concealed her art. By the initiated the artless artfulness of the lecturer is fully appreciated ; every cap fitted, every stab noted, every bitter blow, every sly thrust traced to the head or heart for which it was intended. "She left not Lancelot brave nor Galahad clean." The insinuations scattered broadcast by this respectable Vivien are all-reaching.

This grossly false statement started others, while many members of my own profession placed caps on their heads which were never intended to be worn by them and declared that everything in my paper was not only meant to be personal but even the names of the people at whom my supposed shots were made were mentioned.

As it is one of the foundations of my belief that people in public life must be prepared to be attacked in public for their public utterances, I refused the invitations to reply or to allow anyone to reply on my behalf, although my husband did feel compelled to deny that my allusion to the advertisement to be obtained by illness referred to any particular actor or actress.

I need hardly add that certain journals refused to believe it.

On reading through this paper after a lapse of nearly half a century I find there is very little of the intrinsic statements which I should have to alter, although some of the less important sidelights might have to be somewhat modified.

On the other hand, I cannot help thinking that when it comes to the consideration of "suggestiveness" to which I referred in comparing the dialogue of half a century ago with that of the Restoration plays, I should have to speak more strongly, for "suggestiveness" in business has given way to what I regard as downright indecency in the way in which women are called upon to disrobe on the stage.

I shall be told, I know, that "to the pure all things are pure," but I also know that "evil communications corrupt good manners" and that just as "the sight of means to do ill deeds makes ill deeds done," so the sight of a beautiful woman on the stage in garments which would cause her to be arrested if she wore them in the street can and constantly does inspire thoughts which are out of harmony with any artistic idea.

I am well aware that women who go in for sport dress indelicately; no, why should I boggle at words, indecently, for it is indecent in my eyes for a woman to appear in public in very short "shorts" with legs bare from above the middle of her thigh to her ankle, but because she feels freer than in a short frock does not make it right. It only emphasises the wrong.

Similarly, I should emphasise my remarks about the dramatic critics with whom I have quarrelled from my earliest youth.

Even to-day I rather pride myself on that fact. My point of view is that they criticise what they have never done themselves. I maintain that a man must have some practical and not merely a theoretical knowledge of an art before he can write understandingly of it and its technique. This does not imply that the critic must be as great an execu-

tive artist as the artist himself, for if he had that much ability he would probably prefer to practise rather than to criticise the art.

If some of the critics whose writings I have read were to run from the street to the stage and dress themselves in armour,—*jointed armour*,—in order to speak a line like, “Where we slept our chimneys were blown down,” they would find that they had no chimneys and discover how the stage receded from their feet.

If the stage was one of the modern revolving ones, they would probably fall with the chimneys. Instead, they sit still in the stalls and find fault with everything the actors do, as I am finding fault with some of the things they do.

Some day, in a better world than this, I hope to be a dramatic critic. When I do, I shall fight with every fibre of my being against the modern custom of insisting that an actor must possess, off the stage, the exact physical qualities which are required for the part he has to portray ; in other words, that he must look off the stage the character he has to represent when he has brought all the adventitious aids he can obtain to transform himself into the outward semblance of the character.

This custom is the ruin of impersonation which is the very essence of the actor's calling. The actor's natural personality may be regarded as well made by God, but behind and beyond it there may be and unquestionably are intellectual qualities which the public does not distinguish for itself because it has not been taught to do so. As, in painting, all countries are made one by the artists, so I would like those higher qualities in actors and actresses to be acknowledged so that the public may break down that outer wall and judge for themselves.

That a certain height is required on the stage for the representation of heroic characters is unquestionable. On the other hand, Edmund Kean, probably the greatest actor England has ever had, certainly the greatest actor of his time who kept alive the great traditions and the conven-

tionalities of the theatre, as I stated when on May 15th, 1933, I laid a laurel wreath on his statue at Drury Lane Theatre in commemoration of the centenary of his death, did not have this advantage. Nor did his son Charles.

There is, also, another class of actor to whom I should like to refer, but of whom the public has no cognisance. These number several comrades I could name who though great actors in theory yet, when before their audience, drive much, if not everything, out of their impersonation and thus become second-rate actors. It is a strange thing this, but it is true. There is a latent force, a source of acting which one must possess to hold his audience.

Sir Herbert Tree's Hamlet, for instance, was magnificent in theory. When he discussed it with me I sat enthralled at the imagination which he brought to bear on the different facets of that complicated character. Yet, when he acted it, something went out of his performance and away went the imaginative quality which had so enthralled me.

Shakespeare recognised it when he made Hamlet give to the players those wonderful words of advice which, were they followed to-day, would, I am sure, raise the art of acting out of the rut in which, in my opinion, it has now fallen.

Like Hamlet, "I have seen players play and heard others praise and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christians, nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably."

To-day, as it was in those days of which I spoke, critics and actors associate far too much. One must be more than human, I will not say to avoid praising, but to blame an actor for a performance when he is your friend.

The position is obviously difficult, for one is torn into twenty pieces by one's liking or disliking for a man or woman and it is a moral impossibility to make one's love



LORD LURGAN

DAME
MADGE KENDAL

[Sport & General
SIR FRANK BENSON SIR JOHN
MARTIN-HARVEY

DAME MADGE KENDAL LAYING A WREATH AT THE FOOT OF THE
STATUE OF EDMUND KEAN ON THE CENTENARY ANNIVERSARY
OF HIS DEATH, 1933

impartial. I remember my dear father used to say, "Madge, do listen to the little voices. Don't they tell you what to do?"

I used to reply, "Yes, daddy, I do, but they never agree."

That is the case with the two little voices that exist in every dramatic critic.

Again, it is a very difficult matter even for a man with an acutely critical mind to know where the author ends and the actor begins and vice versa ; and, if I might venture to whisper it in the streets of Askalon, there are many critics, so-called, who have not that acutely analytical mind which I should like to find in them.

To discover what an actor can do for a play, one should see it acted by a different company and notice how the part which has moved one deeply in the hands of a fine actor leaves one perfectly cold when undertaken by someone less gifted.

Indeed, during my career on the stage I was constantly impressed by the debt authors owed to their actors, a debt which they often neither recognised nor appreciated. This was vividly brought to my personal notice at the time when Mrs. Burnett's famous novel, *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, created a sensation in the literary world.

Mrs. Oscar Beringer brought it to me, as she thought it would make a play. I agreed with her. Together, we sat and cut out of the book everything which was valuable for dramatic purposes. We were so scrupulous that every word that appeared in the play was Mrs. Burnett's own writing.

She was in England at the time and consented to her play being used, yet when it was produced she said to me, "You have cut my novel about rather severely."

"If I had cut any of the flowers of your thought out of the play," I replied, "I would humbly beg your pardon, but it seems to me that I have only knitted your cloth rather more closely and by that means have brought out its brighter colour."

The play being ready for production, we engaged Miss

Winifred Emery to play "Dearest," Little Lord Fauntleroy's mother. She was a beautiful creature whose long lashes actually swept her cheeks. She looked the part and was it. Her performance was as exquisite as I knew it would be. Mr. Cyril Maude, whom I then met for the first time, fell madly in love with her. He no sooner looked than he loved. They were married and for many years always acted together.

Little Lord Fauntleroy was played by Miss Vera Beringer, whom I used to keep all day wearing trousers so that she might know, without looking, where to find her pockets when she was on the stage.

This is the same sort of education for the stage that is given to a soldier that he may know how to take his sword out of the scabbard and put it back without looking at it. Exactly the same knowledge is required by the actor who has to play in costume plays.

Oh, the plays I have witnessed and oh, the struggles I have watched of the actors to find their swords and restore them to their places! And they always look to see where the point of the sword is going.

I am convinced that, although so long has elapsed since she played little Lord Fauntleroy, if Miss Vera Beringer were asked to play Hamlet to-morrow, she would find her sword easily, draw it and return it to its scabbard without looking to see what she was doing.

Esme Beringer, Vera's sister, played the boot-black and played it admirably. She developed into such a fine actress that, on one occasion when I was asked to recommend someone to play Lady Macbeth, I unhesitatingly gave her name and urged that she should be given the part. That she was not was not my fault. I am convinced she would have given a strong representation of it.

For reasons of his own, the manager, who was himself playing Macbeth, did not take my advice and engaged another lady who adopted a foreign accent in private life.

One day at rehearsal, she approached him and said,—

so he assured me,—making her accent as pronounced as possible, “You tell me zis is my great speech in ze play :

“I have given suck and know,
How tender ’tis to love the babe that milks me :
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have pluck’d my nipple from his boneless gums,
And dashed the brains out, had I so sworn as you
Have done to this.

“Tell me,” she went on, “where is zis babe? I ’ave read ze part and I cannot find zere is any scene with ze babe.”

“No,” replied the actor, “you won’t find any scene with the babe ; you had it by your first husband, not by me.”

Another excellent performance in “Fauntleroy” was that of Miss Fanny Brough, as the Irish maid. She was a great actress in her own line of parts.

The man I picked to play the Earl of Dorincourt, Fauntleroy’s grandfather, was Alfred Bishop, who, also, had elements of greatness on the stage.

One day at a rehearsal, when he came on the stage,—with his own personality, of course,—Mrs. Burnett, who was sitting beside me in the stalls, whispered, “I can’t have a man like that playing the earl. I want a man with a Wellington nose, instead of a small one.”

“At the performance, Mr. Bishop will have a Wellington nose,” I assured her.

“Don’t be funny,” was Mrs. Burnett’s retort.

“I never was funny in my life,” I answered. “I am a serious woman and you shall sleep well to-night.”

With that I went on to the stage and said to Mr. Bishop, “Be an amiable creature and make up your dear face, for we have to allay fears about your appearance that are groundless.”

Without a demur, he went to his dressing-room and did as I asked. When next he appeared, made up for the part, no one was more astonished than Mrs. Burnett. She was very silent for some time after.

The play, as everyone knows, had an enormous success and was produced in America, where it made the reputation of many actors.

A contract was made for America. I, however, omitted to sign it, for I am not a business woman, but Mrs. Burnett made a fortune out of the play.

CHAPTER XI

THE COMMAND PERFORMANCE

FEBRUARY 1st, 1887, was a red-letter day in our life, for on that evening my husband and I appeared by the command of Queen Victoria at Osborne before Her Majesty and the members of her Court.

I really knew nothing of the preliminary arrangements for the performance which were made by Her Majesty's secretary, Sir Henry Ponsonby, and my husband, whose diary I have consulted for the details of this chapter.

It was originally suggested that the programme should consist of "Uncle's Will" and some recitations; but, later, as the Queen desired to have a programme of more weight, the titles of other plays were submitted and W. S. Gilbert's "Sweethearts" was chosen.

"Sweethearts" furnishes an interesting sidelight on the remarkable memory of Queen Victoria. In the letter, telling of Her Majesty's approval of this play, Sir Henry Ponsonby wrote that the Queen noticed that one of the characters was a maidservant and she wanted to know whether it could not be changed to a manservant so that Mr. Rowley Cathcart, who was a member of our company, might double it with the gardener Wilcox, as Her Majesty remembered with pleasure having admired his acting when he was a member of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean's company. Naturally, the desired alteration was made.

Mr. Hare offered to take the small part of the gardener himself so that, as my husband's partner, he might also be included in the programme. The suggestion was made,

but as Her Majesty wished to see Mr. Cathcart, the idea naturally fell through.

A few days before the performance, a well-known journalist, evidently on the alert for copy regarding the Queen's home in the Isle of Wight, called on my husband, and after explaining that he had never been in any of the royal palaces and was anxious to remedy this defect, offered to accompany him in the capacity of valet as he hoped by so doing to get the *entrée* to the rooms he desired to see.

My husband refused this curious request without a moment's hesitation. With his usual *savoir-faire*, he made no comment on the gentleman's proposed lowering of his status as a journalist.

As, in consequence of the command, both my husband and I were unable to appear at the St. James's, the theatre was closed for that evening.

On the morning of the performance, we were met at Waterloo by Major-General John McNeil, V.C., K.C.B., and on arriving at Southampton we crossed the Solent in the royal steam-launch. At East Cowes a carriage was waiting for us and we drove to the hotel where, in accordance with previously made arrangements, dinner was ready. We then drove to Osborne, where we met Sir Henry Ponsonby and Lady Ely, one of the Queen's ladies-in-waiting, who told me to order anything I wanted from the housekeeper.

I was shown to the dressing-room prepared for me, opposite the Council Chamber, with my husband's room close by. The stage was erected in the Council Chamber and the pretty little scene with a sea view and side doors, which had been made expressly for us, was already set up.

After I had inspected these arrangements, I went to the nursery to see the three children of the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, Princess Margaret, Prince Arthur, and Princess Patricia, who was then called Princess Patsy, for she was always patting her hands. I took them on to the stage

where they looked quite charming and most appropriate to the diminutive *décor*.

When Lady Ely came to my room I told her that I had never seen Her Majesty, at which she replied, "Well, you'll see her and speak to her to-night, for she means to send for you after the performance." Lady Ely then pointed out to me the chair which Her Majesty had had placed in the Council Chamber so that I might know where to look for her.

When the Court had entered the Council Chamber and the servants who had been given permission to see the play had also taken their seats, the Queen entered. A few minutes after the curtain went up on "Uncle's Will," Her Majesty began to laugh and the play went smoothly. When the curtain finally fell Her Majesty herself led the applause.

In seven minutes the curtain went up on "Sweethearts," which went with no less smoothness. As soon as I had removed my make-up Lady Ely came for me and Sir Henry Ponsonby for my husband. As we were going to the drawing-room, Lady Ely told me to take off my right-hand glove as the Queen was going to allow me to kiss hands; she also told me that during all the years she had been with the Queen, Her Majesty had never received an actress in the Drawing-Room with all the Court.

When we arrived in the drawing-room Her Majesty moved a step forward to greet me and presented me with her hand which I kissed. She was more than gracious in her compliments and presented me to Princess Beatrice and my husband to Prince Henry of Battenberg, with whom she left us while she moved across the room to talk to Lord Sackville and the Countess of Braemar, who was in waiting on the Princess Frederica of Hanover.

In a few moments, however, Her Majesty returned and talked to my husband and me about "Lady Clancarty," which we were rehearsing. Naturally, Her Majesty knew the story, and in reply to her questions, my husband told

her that we often went to Hampton Court Palace to study the furniture that we might get all the appointments exactly right. This we certainly did.

In the course of the conversation which we were privileged to have with the Queen, she talked of many of the great actors whom she had seen earlier in her reign, among them being Mr. Macready, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean, Mr. Phelps, Mr. Buckstone, Mr. Benjamin Webster, the elder William Farren, Mr. Alfred Wigan, Mr. Charles Mathews, Mr. Keeley, Mr. Compton, Madame Vestris, Mrs. Warner, Mrs. Nesbit, Lady (Theodore) Martin (Helen Faucit), all passed away, and also Mrs. Keeley, Miss Woolgar (Mrs. Alfred Mellon), Mrs. German Reed (Miss Priscilla Horton), who were then, happily, alive.

The conversation concluded, Her Majesty bade us good night and, after again offering me her hand which I kissed, left the room.

I went back to my dressing-room and when bidding good night to Lady Ely she told me she was going back with us to London as her time in waiting was over.

When I had changed, Sir John McNeil told me H.R.H. Prince Henry of Battenberg was waiting to take me in to supper. A little while later Major Edwards came to me with two books, the Queen's birthday book in which he asked my husband and me to sign our names and the Queen's private German prayer book for my signature only. This I was told was an exceptional favour. After supper we left Osborne shortly after one o'clock and drove to the hotel at East Cowes, from which next day we were taken to Southampton in the royal steam-launch and so to London.

A week later I received a letter from Lady Ampthill telling me that a small parcel was being sent to me by special messenger from Buckingham Palace. It came, addressed to "Mrs. Kendal Grimston from Her Majesty the Queen," and consisted of a brooch in the design of the royal crown composed of diamonds, rubies and

sapphires. A few days later Lady Ampthill wrote again saying Her Majesty wished for the autographs and photographs of the actors who had appeared before her.

The day after the performance the *Court Circular* recorded the performance in the following terms :

In the evening Mr. and Mrs. Kendal and Mr. Rowley Cathcart had the honour of appearing at Osborne before the Queen and the Royal Family.

The following pieces were acted :

“ UNCLE’S WILL ” by THEYRE SMITH

Florence Marigold	.	.	.	.	Mrs. Kendal.
Charles Cashmore	.	.	.	.	Mr. Kendal.
Mr. Barker	.	.	.	.	Mr. Cathcart.

SCENE : *An Apartment at the Seaside*

after which,

“ SWEETHEARTS ”

A Dramatic Contrast in Two Acts by W. S. GILBERT

Miss Jennie Northcote	.	.	.	Mrs. Kendal.
Mr. Harry Spreadbrow	.	.	.	Mr. Kendal.
Wilcox, a gardener	.	.	.	Mr. Cathcart.

SCENE : *The garden of a pretty country cottage*

ACT I : 1844. *Spring.*

ACT II : 1874. *Autumn.*

Mr. and Mrs. Kendal had the honour subsequently of being received by Her Majesty in the Drawing Room after the performance.

The ladies and gentlemen in waiting had the honour of joining the Royal Circle.

General the Rt. Hon. Sir Henry and Lady Ponsonby, Miss and Mr. Frederick Ponsonby, Lady Cowell, the Rev. Canon and Mrs. Prothero, Major and Mrs. Edwards, and Miss Majendie had the honour of being invited.

It may not be without interest if I add that the programme for the Queen’s use was printed in gold on fringed white satin and surmounted by the Royal Arms in their proper colours.

The programmes for the general company were printed in the same style on white paper with an embossed lace design similar to that of the valentines which were in current use at the time.

There is no sunshine without its shadow. When in Lady

Ely's hearing someone congratulated me on the signal honour which had been shown to my husband and me, she turned to me and said, "Think of the jealousy this is going to arouse."

She was right. It did arouse jealousy and even vituperation. Still, one paper did remark that our command

was the first occasion on which Her Majesty will have attended any theatrical presentation for nearly thirty years, the last private performance having been commanded at Windsor Castle when the late Prince Consort was alive. It is more than satisfactory to see so tangible a proof of recognition has been paid to those artists alone who have not only by their talent, but by their domestic virtues, have done so much to lift the drama in both a social as well as from a professional point of view.

A day or two later, on going into my husband's study he handed me a sheet of paper saying, "Here is a bill from my partner for the expenses for the night the theatre was closed for the Command Performance."

As I took the paper from him I asked, "What are we going to do about it?"

"I've already drawn a cheque to pay it," he replied. Later he received a cheque from Sir Henry Ponsonby stating that the Queen insisted on paying all the expenses of the evening and included a special fee of five guineas for Mr. Cathcart's services.

In connection with the Command Performance I received two letters a few days before we went to Osborne. One was from Miss Patty Chapman (Mrs. F. M. Paget), Charles Kean's niece, who had acted with him.

So marked a compliment has not been paid to any member of our profession by Her Majesty since my uncle was appointed royal manager at Windsor. In truth, the compliment paid to you and Mr. Kendal is even greater than that bestowed upon my uncle, the Queen having retired for so many years (ever since her great bereavement) from all theatrical amusements. I am glad, oh, so glad.

The other was from Mrs. Robert Wyndham, the widow of the manager of the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, where we always appeared whenever we went to that city.

DEAR MRS. KENDAL,

To say I am delighted is not the word. I am enchanted and virtue is its own reward !

You may depend the Queen knows the right persons to select, not because she was kind to me years ago, but she knows clever and good people. I am so pleased.

Mrs. Robert Wyndham, the wife of the manager of the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, was a remarkable woman. Her resourcefulness in getting out of a difficulty was most felicitous, as a story told me by Mr. Harry Kemble, who was a member of their company at the time, will prove.

On a certain Friday evening she and her husband found themselves without sufficient money in the bank to meet the salaries at noon next day, when all the members of the company attended "treasury," as it used to be called. Having considered the accounts, Mrs. Wyndham said to her husband : " You must go to — and get him to lend you a hundred pounds."

Mr. Wyndham expostulated. In vain. His wife had the final word, as wives should ; and as he had been well trained in husbandry, he went.

Mrs. Wyndham put on her cloak and hat, went to the theatre and put the office clock forward half an hour. The moment it struck twelve, she left the treasury, that fatal treasury with nothing in it, and, locking the door after her, said to the first comer, " Late again ! How terrible all this is ; here have I been waiting until my patience is exhausted and I am not going to open the door again. I shall make a new rule. Anyone who is not here by twelve o'clock must wait until the evening for his salary. If I do this two or three times, perhaps the ladies and gentlemen will learn the meaning of the word ' punctuality.' "

Everybody was distressed at the inconvenience he or she had caused and then all apologised humbly to her for being late.

Mrs. Wyndham hurried home and found that her husband had borrowed the money. The various sums due to the

actors were put into small envelopes with their names written on them.

In the evening she handed each actor the appropriate envelope and with a most delightful smile said, "I have taught you your lesson to-day, and, perhaps, I may have to teach it to you again."

She was a genius, God bless her. She was a wife indeed.

CHAPTER XII

NEW YORK

SOME time before the agreement between my husband and Mr. Hare terminated, the question of renewing the tenancy of the St. James's Theatre came up for discussion and my husband asked me what my views were about it.

"I'm tired of being the leading lady of the St. James's Theatre at twenty-five pounds a week," I replied. "As we have had many offers for America, I think we had better go while I am still young enough to jump about in 'A Scrap of Paper.'"

When it was announced that my husband and I intended to undertake this hazardous enterprise, several of our friends decided that our departure should be marked with "a white stone," and a committee was formed to organise a farewell banquet at the Hotel Metropole, on July 16th, 1889, under the chairmanship of the Rt. Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, M.P.

On that occasion nearly two hundred well-known men and women were present.

Mr. Chamberlain's speech, which was reported verbatim in the leading daily papers, was as follows :

"I have now the pleasure of proposing the toast of the evening. Mr. and Mrs. Kendal, whom we shall accompany with our best wishes on the occasion of their first visit to our cousins across the water. I am very grateful to the committee for having made me your mouth-piece on this occasion, although I am prepared for the expression of some surprise that such a distinction should have been conferred on a mere politician, whose professional avocations have so little in common at first sight with the art to which our guests have devoted their lives.

Ladies and gentlemen," he continued after the interruption of laughter, "I see that you have anticipated me. That is the first impression, and it is a hasty and inaccurate one, because the drama which has been progressing for so many centuries on the boards of St. Stephen's, which has had the longest run of any play, and which has excited a certain amount of popular interest and appreciation, justifies my presence here to-night.

"I claim for the House of Commons that we also are the abstract and brief chroniclers of the time—not so brief as we might be, but that is a detail—and at least among our members you will find the most versatile actors of the day. Each man in his time plays many parts; all styles and all branches of the profession are represented. We have those who 'tear passion to tatters'—to very rags—and we have others who are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumbshow and noise. We have our leading gentlemen, our heavy fathers, our light comedians; and there are clowns who forget the injunction of Hamlet and who set out to make a certain quality of spectators laugh, although some necessary questions of the play have at this time to be considered. Ladies and gentlemen, you will see that there is a competition between St. Stephen's and the legitimate drama, and that may perhaps account for the fact, which I deplore, that when, occasionally, the Legislature concerns itself with the dramatic profession, it does so in a certain spirit of criticism and suspicion which is altogether unworthy of the subject. . . .

"I have thought sometimes that, with all our advantages, the tendency of the age is to too great monotony, and that therefore we ought to welcome anything that relieves our somewhat ordinary but colourless existence. The imagination of men has to be cultivated as well as their material existence provided for, and the imagination of men grows on the creations of genius, which are, in many cases, developed for us and interpreted by the skill of the actor. It is the actor who clothes the creations of genius, who gives them life, and who impresses upon the hearts and minds of men the thoughts and words of the greatest writers of all time. I know it has been said by a somewhat jaundiced critic that an actor is a man who repeats indifferently a portion of a tale invented by another; but you will agree with me that that is a very imperfect and insufficient definition; and that every true actor imparts something of himself to the creations that he illustrates, that he supplements and completes his author; and I think it is probable that some of the greatest literary possessions we enjoy, possessions of all time, the heritage of the ages, would never have seen the light but for the certainty that they would find competent and skilled interpretation in the genius of the actor.

"I can understand how in these circumstances in other times and other countries the State has not thought it beneath its duty to foster and mature the stage and encourage it by material aid and support.

Here, according to our wont, we leave everything to individual effort. We have left it to the actors themselves to maintain the best traditions of the English stage, and you will agree with me that foremost among living actors our guests have done what in them lay to uphold a lofty and worthy ideal. The school of English comedy, the school which holds the mirror up to nature, and which has depicted for us with so much grace and simplicity the passing incidents of contemporary life and manners, has had no more delicate and no more intelligent exponents.

"If there are any persons still who think that staginess, that a mannered gait and presentation are essential consequences of taking to the boards, let Mr. and Mrs. Kendal undeceive them. They have been, I think I may say, nurtured on the stage; all their lives have been inseparably connected with it. We may also say that there they have gained their education; that they learned their letters in the 'flies,' and I believe it is historical that they pursued their courtship at the 'wings.' Since then they have been constantly before the footlights, yet they remain what we know them—the frank and natural, the courteous and kindly English lady and gentleman. The esteem in which they are held on this side of the water may be judged by this gathering, one of the most representative that I have ever had the honour of attending.

"Here are brought together representatives of the professions of the law, of divinity—I am glad to say—of medicine, politics and judicial luminaries, and not least some of the ablest and foremost representatives of the profession which our guests themselves follow. We are met here to honour them. We are met here to show our respect for their private worth and character, as well as for their public abilities; and we bespeak for them kindly welcome from our kinsfolk—our American cousins. We are confident that their talents will justify our commendation, and will ensure a happy result to the new enterprise in which they are embarking. I propose to you, my lords, ladies, and gentlemen—'The health of Mr. and Mrs. Kendal.'"

In reply, my husband, beginning with the modest avowal,

"Although I earn my living by speaking in public, public speaking is by no means my strong point. I am so accustomed to have words found for me—words infinitely more choice than I could find for myself—that on this occasion I am indeed much at a loss; for it would require a copious selection of all the most grateful phrases in the English language to express, even in an inadequate manner, the feelings with which Mrs. Kendal and I are inspired by this remarkable and most significant manifestation of your friendship and regard. That such a number of our personal friends should have assembled this evening to wish us God-speed on the long journey which is before us is indeed

a practical proof of affection and good-will, of which we may well be proud, and by which we are certainly most deeply touched."

He continued,

"It is our ambition not only to succeed in pleasing the American public but in upholding and extending the repute of the British Dramatic profession,"

and he concluded,

"We trust that on our return from America we shall find that we have done nothing to forfeit your esteem or to lessen your affectionate good will."

Mr. Chamberlain then presented me with a diamond brooch and addressing me said,

"I have now to complete these proceedings with the performance of a most pleasant duty. It is to ask Mrs. Kendal that she will be pleased to accept this jewel as a slight token of the regard of her friends. It is a testimony of our gratitude to her for the many pleasant hours we have spent in listening to her. It is a recognition of the brilliant creations of her genius which will always be inseparably connected with her name. In times not so very far removed from us the profession of the actor had fallen into temporary disrepute, and we read how the most gifted French actress of her time, although fêted and adulated in her public career was yet the subject of social exclusion during her life-time, and at her death was denied by churlish priests the rites of the Church to which she belonged. And, if now, evidences of such bigotry and intolerance have almost disappeared from amongst us it is largely owing—chiefly owing—to those who, like Mrs. Kendal, have shown how to combine the virtues of the woman with the talents of the actress, and who have ennobled the profession to which they belonged by the personal dignity and by the weight of character which they exhibited. Therefore it is to the woman, as well as to the actress, that we pay homage. We ask you, Mrs. Kendal, to accept and to wear this slight memento of our esteem; and we couple it with a most earnest and sincere wish of many years of honoured life and continued happiness."

Still quoting from the newspapers I find that I said,

"In what words can I convey to you the expression of my gratitude? I thank you all, again and again, not only for your beautiful gift, but also for the flattering words that have accompanied it. The intrinsic value of your present, great as it is, is of less account in my eyes than the kindly feelings that have prompted its offering, and not the least

gratifying feature in connection with it is the knowledge that much time and thought have been devoted to it by my friends and *confrères* who have little of either to spare. I may have my own opinion, as others may have theirs, as to whether I merit all that has been said of me in this room to-night ; but one thing I may say, that however much our past efforts may fall short of the praise accorded them, all my future shall be devoted to my endeavour to deserve them.

“My husband, and the members of our company, and my poor self, are about to appear before new and critical audiences. In the face of such an ordeal to come, it is a great and valuable encouragement to know that we are bearing with us the good wishes of those who, although we are privileged to call our friends, are not the less impartial judges. It is to me a happy omen that among those who are here to wish us God-speed is Mrs. Chamberlain, who comes from one of the most cultivated and intellectual cities in the United States. When I recall the welcome extended on the other side to my brothers and sisters in art, and the appreciation shown on this side of the visits of our American colleagues, I am emboldened to feel very sanguine as to our venture. Though in America the canons of artistic taste are exalted and exacting, there is always a kindliness which will condone our shortcomings.

“I know not whether Mrs. Chamberlain, who has done so much to draw the two countries together, will consent to view the exchange of artistic visits as international incidents. The two countries are united not only by blood and kinship, but by artistic sympathy and interests, in those domestic bonds of which we have a happy instance here to-night. I fear I have spoken too long, but the circumstances must plead my excuse. With such surroundings, such cordial encouragements, such dear old friends in public and private life, a woman may well be forgiven for departing from the silent habit of her sex. Let me again thank you and assure you of my gratitude for this lovely gift, which I shall treasure and wear with pleasure and with pride :—

So if your friendship keep us in your view,
And if remembrance die not in your heart,
There will be less of sorrow in adieu,
And this farewell be healed of a smart.
Seas may divide us then, yet sunder not—
They are not absent who are not forgot.

Sir Charles Russell, M.P., later Lord Russell of Killowen, Lord Chief Justice of England, proposed the drama, to which Mr. J. L. Toole replied, and the health of Mr. and Mrs. Chamberlain was proposed by our former partner, Mr. Hare, and, of course, replied to by Mr. Chamberlain.

On that first visit to America our company, in addition

to ourselves and my husband's secretary, consisted of sixteen actors, eight actresses and five servants.

My husband's secretary had been a captain in the 60th Rifles, but had retired from the army and become an acting manager, for he loved the theatre and acting.

I believe he even went so far as to play Hamlet, but he played it only once !

He was a real soldier, trim, upright, a real sergeant-major at heart and he treated us all indiscriminately of our position in the company as if we were Tommies.

I did not care for that kind of treatment and one day I had to tell him I had received no ribbons or a shilling from him and I hoped he would not consider the company as recruits any longer and would he please alter his manner, as actors, though rogues and vagabonds by law, were not members of the army.

"I thought it would do them good to have some discipline in the company."

"Yes," was my answer, "but Napoleon's code was, 'I'll try to make the people love me, but if they won't, they shall fear me.' As our acting manager, Captain, you need not go so far as to be Napoleonic in manner."

He was a curious character, but my husband always said he was the most honest creature, the most upright man he had ever met in his life, adding, "Had he been my secretary ten years earlier, we should be much better off than we are."

"Well," I replied, "I don't have anything to do with the money part of the theatre, but he jingles no gold in my ears when he speaks."

To get to the steamer we had to go out on a tug. As we started it began to rain. I was under cover and beckoning to the ironing maid who was getting wet I said, "Do come under here and shelter until we get to the boat."

"Oh, madam," she said, "aren't we going to America in this boat?"

"No," I replied. "We shall be off this in a quarter of an hour."

With apprehension in her eyes she looked at me and said, "Oh, madam, I hope it's not a smaller boat than this."

What a crass ass, but what a good ironer !

We reached New York I think on Sunday, September 28th, and the following Sunday my husband and I were invited to have tea at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Watson Gilder, who played a prominent position in the literary and dramatic world of New York.

My husband, with much on his mind in connection with the opening of our Season the next evening, declined to go so I, alone, accepted the invitation.

When I arrived I was shown into a very handsome drawing-room in which there were a great many people among whom I recognised Signor Salvini and his son Alexander, who was then making his reputation on the New York stage, Mr. Edwin Booth, Mr. Joseph Jefferson, Mr. Lawrence Barrett and Madame Modjeska, an actress I admired greatly when she had appeared in London a few years previously.

I thought her performance of Camille in a new version of "The Lady of the Camelias" called "Heartsease" marvellous. Her playing of the scene with her lover's father and the writing of her farewell letter to the man she adored was one of the most moving pieces of acting I had ever seen.

The way she spoke when she wrote, "When these flowers on my breast have withered, I shall be far away," brought unbidden tears to my eyes.

The difference between her performance of Camille and that of Sarah Bernhardt was remarkable. Sarah's passion was magnificent and true to life, but she always gave me, at all events, the impression that it was temporary and could not endure till the end of her life.

Modjeska, on the other hand, raised Camille's passion to a great height and when she met Armand, the impression

was conveyed that, in spite of her past life, her affection was etherealised, sublimated to such a degree that nothing but death could make it cease.

So enthralled was I by her performance that I used to send her anonymously, every day, a bunch of artificial heartsease delicately perfumed. To my chagrin, a garrulous friend told her who the giver was.

At that time the theatrical world was greatly interested in the question whether the actor does or should feel the emotion he is representing or merely pretend to feel it. In France this is known as the Diderot Paradox from the distinguished actor who first formulated the question. A fact which gave it its current interest was that *Harper's Magazine* had published two articles on the subject, one by Henry Irving maintaining that the actor felt, and the other by Coquelin Aîné declaring that the actor only pretended to feel.

In the conversation which ensued on the subject, the question was put whether in a pathetic scene the actor should shed real tears in order to move the audience.

Each of the distinguished men I have mentioned was asked, in turn, to give his views.

Salvini began and spoke for five minutes, making what was evidently a strong speech in a voice that rang like a cathedral organ through the room. He went on and on and on and not a soul understood a word of what he was saying. I turned to his son and asked him to translate the pith of his father's remarks into French, for I said, "When he speaks Italian, we can't catch his words but only listen to his magnificent voice." Alexander translated as I asked, and I understood that the great actor's opinion was that it depended on the *mood* of the moment whether the actor wept or not.

When Mr. Booth was asked to speak, he declined, as he declined on every possible occasion, for he was extraordinarily reticent, although everything he could have said about acting was of enormous value.

Mr. Joseph Jefferson, who was then regarded as America's chief comedian and whose performance of Rip Van Winkle had won a worldwide reputation for him rather burked the question, for he thought no actor can judge the impression he is making. In illustration of this he told us two stories.

The first was that when, at times, he had gone off the stage as Rip, thinking he had acted so badly that he ought to retire, he would meet someone on Broadway who said, "Joe, my boy, you were magnificent last night. You were Rip Van Winkle."

On the other hand, he continued, "I have come off the stage patting myself on the back that I had never played the part so well, when, next morning, I would meet someone who said, 'My dear Joe, when are you going to retire? I never saw you play so badly as last night.'"

Madame Modjeska, to whose skill as an emotional actress I have had the pleasure of bearing testimony, placed the onus of responsibility of shedding real tears or not on the mentality of the audience; and that is all we have to appeal to.

She then proceeded to relate that on one occasion she had recited the numerals in her own language to an audience which knew nothing of Polish. Beginning brightly she worked the words up to a climax of laughter and suddenly becoming serious in the middle of the applause, she became tragic in her manner, took a handkerchief out of her pocket and began to weep until she had her audience moved to deepest sympathy.

Turning to me, Mr. Gilder asked my views.

As far as I recollect I said that there was one word in the English and American languages spelt in the same way, however, "Heart."

If we lay undue stress on the latter portion of the word we become too cold. If we emphasize the earlier part we become too impulsive, but, in every instance, whether in the classical or modern plays, we give due regard to "heart"

and "art" and treat them with sincerity we must carry the world with us.

I went on to relate that my first offer to visit America came from Mr. Dion Boucicault, who, having seen me several times in "The Squire," made a bet with a friend as to whether I should cry real tears when I spoke certain words in a certain scene. To his surprise I always did. The words were, "There is no heat comes from burnt love letters." I have always thought that was the finest, the most pregnant and the most imaginative line Arthur Pinero ever wrote.

I was surprised at Mr. Boucicault's bet, for he was a consummate actor, and acting is the representation of a human being under the influence of a series of emotions at a given time in the life of the character he is representing. It seemed then, and it still seems to me, that the emotion and the incidents being constant the actor's performance must likewise be a constant one and not change in one iota.

In this statement, I take my stand with Byron who wrote :

In spite of criticising elves
Those who make others feel
Must feel themselves.

When I sat down, Jefferson got up and embraced me saying, "I guess that puts the subject all right." Salvini turned to me with the only three words he ever used to me in English, "I loafe you."

These words he used to repeat whenever he met me,—in a room, on the street, in the theatre.

I learnt to reply, "Io t'amo."

The mention of these famous actors stirs pleasant memories of them in my mind. When Salvini spoke, his magnificent voice recalled his performance of Othello at a matinée he gave during his first London season at the request of the members of his profession who were anxious to witness it.

In the second act when Othello, after having won the war, lands in Cyprus with all the crowd cheering him,

and he sees his adored wife waiting to welcome him, Salvini threw down his sword, raised his face to her with tears of joy in his eyes, and as he held her in his embrace spoke that marvellous line :

If it were now to die, 'twere now to be most happy.

It was transcendant in its effect.

If only the people who are alive to-day could die when they want to and at the happiest moment of their lives, how different this world would be. Yet Fanny Kemble wrote that well-known couplet,

The land of sorrow and *that* land alone
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown.

On the occasion to which I have referred, at the end of the third act, after the great scene with Iago, Salvini was called and recalled to the stage nine times.

The rising of the curtain in those days was different from what it is to-day. Then, it fell on the stage and nobody shook it, and it did not go up again until the applause of the public compelled it.

Alas poor Yorick ; I mean, alas poor curtain ! It hardly even touches the stage to-day, for when it comes within a foot or two it begins to go up again.

At the end of the performance of Othello, the leading actors who had been accommodated in the stalls were permitted to go on to the stage to meet Salvini. He was modest, unassuming and charming, and as he shook hands with everyone in turn, he said something pleasant.

Mrs. Bancroft, emotionally moved, kissed him effusively ; he returned the salute and left some of his dark make-up on her cheek ! I was at the end of the procession and knelt to him, as I said, with my bad French accent, "A vos pieds, Monsieur."

As we filed out of the theatre, I, following behind Mr. Herbert Campbell, heard him say, " Oh, dear, and I've got to go back to Drury Lane and play in the pantomime." Although I did not know him I moved forward and said,

"I feel like you. I've got to go back to the Court Theatre and play in my pantomime." From that time Mr. Campbell and I became brother and sister.

I need scarcely say he had an acute sense of humour which enabled him to introduce witticisms on the spur of the moment.

Once when we were playing "The Ironmaster," adapted from "Le Maître de Forges," and he was acting with Mr. Dan Leno in the pantomime, "Babes in the Wood," I took a box and went with all my children. Leno played a small child who cried vigorously until Mr. Campbell went up to the cot and removed an enormous pin.

"Poor child," he exclaimed, "no wonder he cried." Then he walked down the stage and leaning his arm on the edge of the proscenium he said under his breath, "Oh, forgive them; it's adapted from the French."

How I laughed.

What a wonderful artist Leno was. I think the funniest thing I ever saw him do was the Widow Twankey in the pantomime "Aladdin."

In the early part of the piece he had a bald head, but for a whisp of jet black hair about the size of a five-shilling piece. When, however, the jewels were found, his hair under the invigorating influence of a tonic which so many widows now use began to grow so rapidly and took on the fashionable hue so readily, that by the time the widow went to the Prince's ball she had a beautiful head of golden hair.

As an interviewer of a daily paper Mr. Campbell entered to discover what had produced the remarkable change, if my memory is correct.

"Stop," said the widow, and left the stage to return a moment later with her golden hair nearly as long as her dress. As they shook hands, Leno said, "Excuse me," and taking up the coal scuttle poured hundreds of golden sovereigns on the interviewer's head.

How bald it seems in the telling.

How brilliant it was in the doing.

The next year when Salvini returned to London, he made a tour of the theatres to study English acting. Imagine my consternation when, one night, shortly before the curtain went up, I heard that he was sitting in a box.

I sent for my husband and said, "I can't act before Salvini. You have got to get him out of the theatre."

"But what can we say?" asked my husband.

"Tell him he's come to the wrong house; the wrong play. Tell him anything, but get him out." They did manage to get him out and the curtain went up. To my husband's remonstrances I replied, "I have jeopardised my reputation often, but I shall not risk it with him."

With his characteristic method of preventing me from being conceited, my husband replied, "You have made a lot of fuss, for I don't believe Salvini would ever have noticed you."

Anyway, I spared myself the ordeal and, after all, what should a woman do but rescue herself when necessary from a situation which I thought then and feel now was impossible.

Mr. Jefferson gave a matinée for us in New York on purpose that the members of our company and ourselves might see him act *Rip Van Winkle*. On that occasion we sent him a beautiful wreath with the flags of England and America intertwined.

To him I sent the following lines :

There are two tiny voices in the soul ;
One strikes a sad note, the other light.
Great actor, painter, friend to all,
Touch both these strings and make art glad to-night.

On one occasion, we spent a delightful afternoon with Mr. Jefferson at his country house. It was a magnificent estate and as he looked over the wide expanse of his property which extended miles on either hand, he said to me, "As you see, there is plenty of room here for me to build a

home for each of my children, but none will be nearer than three miles ! ”

Later, we met again in Philadelphia and he took me to the Forrest Home, a theatrical charity in memory of America's famous actor, Edwin Forrest. When I was shown over the house I noticed there were wonderful portraits of Forrest in his various characters in every room. They were all remarkable for one strongly noticeable fact, they bore what is a *certain* mark of histrionic ability.

I was anxious to meet all the veteran members of our profession living in the house and suggested we should meet in one room so that we should know each other, if ever we met again,—even in heaven.

Instead, I was taken by the matron to see the various bedrooms. On the first floor, I was shown a magnificent room and I asked, “Who sleeps here ? ”

“Nobody,” she replied. “It's the best bedroom in the house and is never used except when one of the inmates is dying, when he is brought down here.”

I thought it at once as gruesome and ludicrous an idea as I have ever heard, to take a dying person out of his bed in order to make his obeisance to death in the best bedroom.

Can such things be
And overcome us like a summer's cloud,
Without our special wonder ?

Among the inmates with whom I talked was a rather old lady who said to me, “I never go to the theatre now, but I certainly shall go when you are acting in Philadelphia for you are so full of nonsense I don't believe you can act at all.”

“Do come,” I said, “for I should love to have your opinion.”

Unfortunately I never got it.

Forrest must have been as remarkable a man as he was an actor.

At the home I was told a story which I was assured was

characteristic of him. One night, after he had played King Lear, an acquaintance went up to him at his hotel and said, "Mr. Forrest, I have often seen you act King Lear, but I never saw you act him so well as to-night."

"Sir," replied Forrest in his magnificent voice, "I act Hamlet, I act Othello, I act Macbeth, but dammit, sir, I *am* King Lear."

Although Mr. Booth had a large repertoire which included many of the Shakespeare plays, I saw him act only once. It was in "The Fool's Revenge," that adaptation of Victor Hugo's "Le Roi s'Amuse," which is known to opera-goers as "Rigoletto," and contains some of the most melodious music Verdi ever wrote.

Mr. Booth was acting at the Old Princess's Theatre in Oxford Street where, later, Mr. Wilson Barrett reigned as an actor-manager for several years. Mr. Hare and his wife had been to see the play and the former, who was a very good judge of acting, was carried away by the magnificence of the performance. He came to me and said, "You must see this piece of acting and for one night your understudy must go on."

With his usual spirit which he threw into everything, he made all the arrangements and obtained seats for the four of us to see Mr. Booth who, at the end of the play, sent round to ask me to go to see him. We were received on the stage by Mrs. Booth, while the men went to his dressing-room.

Not having met us, Mrs. Booth, as she advanced to shake hands, asked, "Which is Mrs. Kendal and which is Mrs. Hare?"

Mrs. Hare drew herself up to her full height and replied, "I have never been on the stage."

As she shook hands with me Mrs. Booth said, "Well, Mrs. Kendal, my step-daughter went last week to see you play and when she came home with red eyes she said she had cried for two whole acts." I was on the point of

blushing at the compliment when she added, "But, there, oh Lord ! she's *easily* moved."

She went on to tell us that she was Mr. Booth's second wife and that the girl was "only her step-daughter."

She talked more quickly than anyone I had ever met before. Then Mr. Booth came in and said to me, "I hope you have enjoyed the performance."

"That is not the word to use for your performance, Mr. Booth."

I wish I could convey something of the impression his acting made on me. His technique was something to marvel at, and the apparent ease with which he did the most difficult things was absolutely bewildering.

His character was that of a deformed man and his first entrance which he made down a flight of stairs to the music of the famous "*La Donna e Mobile*," was astonishing. He did not walk, he seemed to roll. Again, in the last act when he pleaded with one of the courtiers to take him into the licentious duke's apartment into which his daughter had been carried, the intensity of his emotion stretched one's heart-strings to breaking point.

Either Mrs. Booth or her husband, I don't know which, was related to Sir John Everett Millais, later the President of the Royal Academy, who gave a dinner-party in their honour at his house in Palace Gate. Sir Henry Irving, Mr. Toole, Sir Squire and Lady Bancroft, Mr. and Mrs. Hare, and my husband and I were invited.

When the invitations arrived, Mr. Hare said he thought it would be better if we all went together in a four-wheeler.

"Yes, Hurray," I said ; "and I'll introduce you to Mrs. Booth myself. She talks quicker than I do and never stops."

"Nonsense," replied Mr. Hare, "that would be impossible."

"It's not nonsense," I rejoined. "She never stops. She goes on and on and on, like Niagara Falls."

When we arrived, I took Mr. Hare to Mrs. Booth and introduced him.

She looked him up and down, took out a notebook and wrote on a page, "I have laryngitis. I can't speak. I ought not to be here." Mr. Hare looked at me and blandly remarked, "What did I tell you?"

Happily, at that moment, the butler announced dinner.

Sir Henry Irving sat next to Mrs. Booth with me on his right and Mr. Toole on my right.

During the dinner Mrs. Booth kept handing scraps of paper to Sir Henry who, turning to me said, "What does this lady mean? I can't pass the whole of my dinner writing notes to her."

To my great delight, Mr. Toole, with his keen sense of humour, took in the situation.

Mr. and Mrs. Booth must have been the oddest contrasts, for he was the least talkative of mortals and, I noticed, said very little to Lady Millais whom he had taken down.

We returned in the four-wheeler as we had come. As we got in Mr. Hare exclaimed, "What a party! Wrong from the moment that you introduced me to that woman who, you said, talked like Niagara. A dried Niagara! They sent my wife down with a man she doesn't like, and I took down a woman I hadn't spoken to for a long time."

Almost immediately after we arrived in New York, Mr. Booth invited my husband to The Players' Club, the capital for which he provided, when he founded it. The next time I met him I thanked him for the courtesy he had shown, as I said I felt sure that my husband would be glad to make use of the temporary membership offered to him during our stay in New York.

Mr. Booth smiled his exquisite, sweet smile at me. "While in New York!" he echoed. "Mrs. Kendal, your husband is a member of The Players' for life."

That was eminently characteristic of Edwin Booth.

During our stay in New York he instituted the custom of providing supper on Saturday night to which any actor who cared to go to the club was hailed as a welcome guest.

As a housekeeper, the commissariat interested me and I asked him one day, "How can you know how to provide, when one Saturday evening twenty men may turn up and sixty the next?"

"My dear," he answered, "we must leave enough dollars behind us for such emergencies."

And he did.

Edwin Booth's life saddened as he grew older.

As he grew sadder so he grew sweeter and always endeavoured to do some service to his cloth.

When he heard of the few lines I had written to Mr. Jefferson, he called on us and said to me, "What have I done that I have not had something written about me?"

"Who could write appropriately about you?" I asked. "Lots of people have done so," he replied, and added whimsically,— "or inappropriately."

Next morning, Mr. Frohman called and asked my help for someone who was very poor; he wanted three hundred dollars.

"I haven't got it," I said. "But I'll try and get it for you."

The next morning I was reading in a life of Booth that on the night he was born there was a great configuration of the stars. I was very much impressed and ran down to my husband's room and told him that I had an idea for an article which I might sell for Mr. Frohman's protégée, on the law-abiding qualities of the actor, coupled with the fact that no actor had ever been hanged.

"No," my husband replied, "but there was one who ought to have been: Booth's brother, John Wilkes Booth, who shot Abraham Lincoln in Ford's Theatre, Washington, in 1865."

This put my brain to sleep and covered it up with an eiderdown quilt for six weeks. Then I awoke, took heart of grace and produced the following lines on hearing Booth intended retiring from the stage.

Thine art two nations have paid tribute to
Thy name the world doth know.

Upon the night that thou wast born
Meteors flashed in the sky
And on thy head a crown did fall !
How radiant hast thou kept its jewels.

And when thou dost resign that crown
Who like thyself can do that manlike act
With such majestic mien, such dignity
And such unselfish grace !

But let that night of darkness
Be distant far, for surely then
All eyes will weep and our immortal Shakespeare
Will feel the pangs of death once more.

On the publication of what everyone will recognise as
“free verse,” the sense of humour of the American press
awoke.

One of the papers asked, “What does this British woman
mean by trying to write verses in the morning and taking
our money in the evening for acting.”

The well-known weekly paper, *Life*, went so far as to
declare, “She has killed Edwin Booth.”

The fanatical act of his brother so affected Edwin Booth
that although he lived for more than a quarter of a century
after it, nothing would induce him to act in Washington.

All sorts of inducements were offered to him. Among
them was a petition signed by ten thousand people, of whom
I was one, entreating him to alter his resolve. He was
immovable.

Such was the magnetic and compelling quality of his
acting that, when he was announced to appear in Balti-
more, the nearest town to Washington he consented to
visit, special trains used to be run from Washington to
that city in order to convey the hundreds of people every
night who thought nothing of the hour’s run before and
after the theatre in order to see Edwin Booth act.

At the end of 1893, the year in which Mr. Booth died,

Salvini delivered an address at The Players' Club in which he paid me the compliment of quoting what I had once previously said that, "Shakespeare would give his hand to Edwin Booth and lead him to his God."

It was a beautiful tribute from Salvini to Booth and especially noteworthy because each owed his greatest impersonation to the world's greatest dramatist.

We made our debut in New York in "A Scrap of Paper," on the evening of Monday, October 7th, 1889.

It was regarded as a bold move on our part, for Sardou's play was, naturally, well known in New York, as Mr. Lester Wallack and Miss Rose Coghlan had played it in Wallack's Theatre and Mr. Wallack was one of the most popular actors in the country.

From our newspaper cuttings I cull these headlines which preceded the article of one of the most distinguished critics in New York :

NEW YORK LED CAPTIVE

UNQUALIFIED SUCCESS OF MR. AND MRS. KENDAL.
THE ICE BROKEN AND THE PUBLIC IS THEIRS—THE
AUDIENCE PARTICULARLY CHARMED BY THE PERSONAL
MAGNETISM OF MRS. KENDAL—"A SCRAP OF PAPER."

Our next production was "The Ironmaster," which New York had seen in the original French, acted by Madame Jane Hading, the original Claire, and Madame Sarah Bernhardt.

Again I quote the same critic's headlines :

AN ENTIRELY NEW HEROINE

MRS. KENDAL'S RENDERING OF 'THE CHARACTER OF
CLAIRE—HER ASSUMPTION OF THE LEADING RÔLE IN
"THE IRONMASTER," COMPARED WITH THAT OF JANE
HADING AND OTHERS—A PAST MISTRESS OF TEARS.

Such was the success of our undertaking that, instead of the single season we had contemplated, we played five in the United States.

One of the most astonishing and gratifying incidents in connection with them occurred when we acted for two,

three or four weeks in one city. It was not uncommon to hear the following dialogue at the box office.

"I want to book seats for this day three weeks."

"I'm sorry, but the play has not been selected for that week."

"I don't care what the play is ; I want to see Mr. and Mrs. Kendal."

I think Edwin Booth was the only other actor of that time to whom that tribute of personal regard was paid by the play-going public of America.

Let no one run away with the idea that we were greeted only with panegyric. Consider the following criticisms :

The Kendals appeared last evening in Pinero's version of Georges Ohnet's drama, "*Le Maître des Forges*," entitled "*The Ironmaster*."

When I beheld Mrs. Kendal, a woman of forty-five, fat and fair, with her cold eyes and artificial school of acting, appearing as *Claire*, a girl of sixteen, I could not help smiling.

I thought of Jane Hading, who achieved such a success as *Claire* in Paris. Ah, she was charming to a degree. Her performance was exquisite—so natural, so unaffected, so pathetic.

Compare the *Claire* of Jane Hading with the *Claire* of grandmamma Kendal !

It cannot be done—for there is no comparison. The French actress was perfection—the English actress looked like a plum pudding and acted like a machine, and was "supported," as the programmes satirically call it, by one of the worst companies ever gotten together—one of the cheapest as well as the weakest.

I suspect the theatre-goers of Philadelphia are beginning to discover that the Kendals are not as great as they profess to be.

Their *repertoire* is poor, and so is their company.

The *North American* said :

Mr. and Mrs. Kendal seem to be particularly fond of this example of the contemporary French drama. When they made their first visit here they selected it as the medium of their *début*, and each time since that they have revisited us "*The Ironmaster*" has been presented. The preference is not wholly intelligible. The motive of the play is not a very agreeable one, and there is a good deal that is artificial in its development. It provides Mr. Kendal with a good part in *Phillippe Derblay*, but Mrs. Kendal is hardly seen to advantage as *Claire*. However, they seem to like it, and they do it sufficiently well to preclude any finding fault with their partiality.

The *Record* spoke with more directness :

The Kendals, with their remarkably weak and inane company of players, appeared at the Broad Street Theatre last night in "The Ironmaster," before a light audience. There was abundant artificiality, but scarcely a gleam of naturalness.

"Before a light audience," is a frank and truthful statement, for "standing room only" had not been visible lately at the Broad Street Theatre.

While I must protest against a woman of Mrs. Kendal's age attempting to play the part of a young girl, I must add that the *Phillippe Derblay* of Mr. Kendal is, in many respects, an excellent performance. It is one of his best rôles.

Mr. Elliott's *Duc de Bligny* was very feeble. Miss Campbell made a nonentity of Suzanne and Mr. Dodson was not equal to *Moullinet*. The English cannot act French characters. They Anglicise them absurdly.

The scenery and details were inferior, and the performance dragged distressingly in parts.

Even our private lives were not exempt from virulent attack. Witness the *Sunday Mercury* :

A young woman correspondent has written me asking the very interesting question whether or not I think Mr. Kendal is henpecked. She relates how she met the Kendals not long ago, and was not so overpowered with the unusual character of the occasion as to lose her powers of observation. She was of the opinion that Mr. Kendal stood in constant fear of his buxom wife, and she states that his buxom wife is in the habit of glancing at her spouse every now and then with looks of contempt. From this my fair correspondent argues that when this happily married couple, with several children, are temporarily removed from the gaze of an admiring public they are in the habit of engaging in the common and plebeian bickerings and disagreements that mark the lives of ordinary married people.

I may answer at once, frankly, that I do not think Mr. Kendal is henpecked. I may say that I have something more than my own opinion to go on. The observation of those who have had abundant opportunities for observation is that Mrs. Kendal is inclined sometimes to find fault with the proceedings of her much-loved and worshipped companion, but that before this sort of thing becomes really annoying to Mr. Kendal he responds so cordially with the first thing that he can lay his hands on, in the style familiar to the true English husband, that Mrs. Kendal discreetly ceases complaining, and the marital condition of affairs resumes the pleasant and hilarious colour that the manager of the Kendals is constantly bringing to the attention of the

liberally paying public. Occasionally, I am told, Mr. Kendal becomes so demonstrative in these cordial responses to wifely nagging that Mrs. Kendal is compelled to make up more artistically for the next night's performance than is usually the case. I am happy to say, however, that bad breaks are of infrequent occurrence and do not seriously interfere with the work of the advance agent.

Henry Irving met the Kendals shortly after their return from their last season's tour in the United States, and Henry, according to a story that Mrs. Kendal has told an intimate friend, was rather inclined to be sarcastic. He had probably seen some of the newspaper stories printed in America anent the Kendals, where the theme was the undying affection entertained by the Kendals for each other and the wild and rapturous devotion that each of the pair feels for the children that they leave behind them over the sea. "Just come back from America?" Henry is represented to have said. "And still doing the conjugal, I see." This with the Henry Irving accent that is familiar to our theatre goers. "Never quarrelling. Never—that is to say, in public. Or never in private either, where the public can hear of it. Delightful. Simply delightful." The story goes on to detail the answer of Madge to this onslaught and Madge's answer was not altogether disconnected with Ellen Terry and the friendship that the great English actor is supposed to entertain for his leading actress. It will be noted that Mr. Irving gave the Kendals perhaps too much credit when he credited them with keeping their domestic difficulties entirely out of the public view.

No, I don't think that Mr. Kendal is henpecked, although Mrs. Kendal is unquestionably given to nagging. That is apparent to anybody who watches the work of the pair closely on the stage, but as Mr. Kendal seems to be amply able to take care of himself, I don't think that any great amount of sympathy should be set aside for his especial use. I am told, however, in this connection, that when Mr. Kendal is out of humor and will not brook criticism, Mrs. Kendal considerably turns her attention to Americans whom she meets socially and gives imitations of them for the edification of her maid, calling upon Mr. Kendal to indorse the imitations as accurate. She starts her imitations with a melodramatic gasp about, "Oh, those bunco American!" and although I am assured by those who have been honored with private views of Mrs. Kendal's mimetic performances that they are atrociously bad and convey nothing of the original that she seeks to reproduce, they are constantly and consistently carried on. There may be bunco Americans, but there won't be many left in the Kendal audiences after they have gotten on to the fashion in which they in turn have been buncoed now for several years with what may be described as the family gag.

A fact which adds to the offensiveness is the dragging in the names of Henry Irving and Ellen Terry.

As I have shown, English journalists fell foul of me in connection with my Social Science paper. Some of them, not content with reserving their criticisms for my performances on the stage, attacked me from other points of view. Mr. Edmund Yates, for instance, the son of an actor and actress, who founded *The World*, the first so-called "society paper" in London, was one of the leaders of the hostile forces against me.

He was a great partisan of certain other actors and apparently thinking that it aggrandised them to traduce their colleagues, he had attacked me on the score of my being too old to go to America.

My age was, of course, no concern of his. Whether I was too old to play the parts in which I appeared was a matter that concerned my audiences and their willingness to accept me in them,—as they undoubtedly did.

Mr. Yates, however, did not confine his attacks to *The World*. He went so far as to write several letters to Mr. Stephen Fiske, the editor of the *New York Sports of the Times*, who not only refused to publish them, but kept them and showed them to my husband and me, assuring us at the same time that he had written to Mr. Yates that he ought to discontinue his attacks.

His recommendation was not followed, for at the end of our first tour when we were coming home, it was proposed that we should be welcomed by a public luncheon.

This gave Mr. Yates the opportunity for returning to the attack, for he published the following article in *The World* :

Surely, surely it is time that this preposterous hero-worship of persons and things connected with the art of acting were laughed down and stamped out? In its latest phase it shows us that a pleasant light comedian, who for many years has been on the stage under the assumed name of Kendal, went, some months ago, with his wife, an excellent actress, to the United States in the pursuit of business, where they achieved a success, to say the least of it, equal to their deserts. Before

leaving England the worthy couple was entertained at a public dinner, at which the lady was presented with a diamond tiara, and now that their proximate return is announced all Harley-cum-Bakerdom is thrilled with expectation. A number of respectable ladies, for the most part wholly unconnected with the theatre, and, save in their respective circles, quite unknown, have formed themselves into a "committee of welcome," and who knows what enthusiastic high jinks they may indulge in, calling upon the general public to participate, simply because two play-actors have been to America, and come back again? Will they emulate the example set by the admirers of Miss Ellen Farren, who, after jiggling herself into the hearts of the Yankees, was gracefully received at the Gaiety Theatre by a painted legend intimating that "The Boys welcome their Nelly?" Will it be set forth on a waving scroll that "The Matrons welcome their Madge?" or in what other form will the pent-up feelings of greasy gush find a fitting vent? Seriously, this suggestion for public enthusiasm is very silly, very vulgar, very uncalled for. Unnoticed, our only Generals return from conquest in little wars; our worthy Admirals come back uncongratulated, though they have escaped accident from the bursting boilers of their own vessels, or collision with sister-ships; missionary Bishops who escape uneaten obtain no special recognition: why, then, should the London public be called on to let off fireworks and sing pæans because two clever comedians have returned from America with money in their pockets?

In spite of this and other animadversions, the luncheon was held on June 26th, 1890, and Dame Geneviève Ward made the speech of welcome.

She was one of my dearest friends, a really great actress. I can recall as if it were yesterday, the first time I met her. She was seated in an armchair in the drawing-room of my husband's uncle, a resident magistrate in Manchester for many years. She looked very like the portrait of the great Siddons as the Tragic Muse, even though she had not taken up the pose.

On that occasion she told me she had given up singing in opera, for which she had been trained, and in which she had been a very great artist and was now going to be a tragedienne. We took to one another immediately.

She was a most delightful companion, straight as a die,—indeed, straighter. Her life story was remarkable, for she was married to one of the Russian *jeunesse d'orée* who

had not had the Czar's permission. When it was discovered, he was exiled to Siberia, so she was never a real wife or a mother.

She made an amazing success in a play called "Forget-me-not," with which she toured the world. It was from every point of view a magnificent performance and she made a great deal of money by it.

Her *Volumnia* also, which she acted at the Lyceum when Henry Irving revived "*Coriolanus*," was very fine, even though she did not attempt the feat with which Sarah Siddons startled the public in the procession to celebrate her son's victory. Then she rolled, it is said, like a drunken woman, intoxicated with the glory of his success.

In the latter days of the war, Dame Geneviève sat for hours every day making shirts for the poor soldiers.

During the war she agreed to appear at a *matinée* at the St. James's in aid of a charity. Concentrated on what she was going to do, she was so exceedingly brusque to two ladies who spoke to her that George Alexander persuaded her to go and sit in his room, promising that he or I would call her when her turn came to appear. When he got her safely in the room, he locked the door. She never knew this, but I am bound to say that I consider George Alexander made one of the most appropriate speeches I ever heard when, as he came down, he whispered to me, "Peace, perfect peace."

While she was in Australia, Dame Geneviève was presented with a sapphire and diamond brooch and ring which she left to me in her will. I attended her funeral, without knowing she was to be cremated. It was, to me, an awful ceremony to go through. I had no idea what the ordeal would be like, but it was her last wish, so I went through with it.

When I arrived at her house I was asked by Mr. Henry Welcome, a very old American admirer and devoted friend of hers, to read an ode to her memory. I complied with the request.

Like all fine tragic actors, she had a keen sense of humour.

At one time at the Adelphi Theatre, the late Mr. Norman Forbes produced a play on "The Man in the Iron Mask," and engaged Miss Ward to play the Queen of France.

A mutual friend who met her during the run was complimenting her on her performance and said, "I have seen two Queens in my life,—Queen Victoria and you as the Queen of France."

"Ah, my dear friend," she replied, "queens are my line of business. I am always a queen."

Some time afterwards a luncheon was given in the City to which my husband and I were invited.

I did not want to go, but I was overruled, especially by Mr. Hare who, in addition to my husband's requests, said that as several other actors and actresses had been invited, I owed it to our profession to be present, as it would seem invidious if I absented myself on the occasion.

In spite of my intuition against it, I agreed to go.

When I went to my seat, I found, to my astonishment, that Mr. Edmund Yates had been placed next to me.

"This is an honour that I dreamed not of," he said.

"Don't you think we had better leave *honour* out of the question?" I answered, in the words of Lady Teazle.

Mr. Yates, however, was not to be put off. He asked me to shake hands with him and urged that we should be friends, as we were cousins.

"That relationship is something I regard as a misfortune," I replied, "for I know all about you and the letters you wrote to Mr. Fiske, which he refused to publish. Please don't speak to me any more, but confine your attentions to your lunch, for you are merely a *chiffonnier* of the press and I will have no further communication with you."

When we returned home and I had told my husband of the incident, he said, "My dear, these journalists have their friends whom they must support. We have never had a press agent, for we rely for our position only on our friends the public. You must remember these men have

been very well fed with Poulet and Burgundy by their friends in our profession, as you have already stated, and they have always used a bad pen dipped in prejudiced ink to our detriment."

Contemplating these articles, which were numerous during my early life, I used to quote, "Sufferance is the badge of our tribe." Like Shylock, I still survive them.

CHAPTER XIII

TOURING IN AMERICA

ONE all important fact must be stated emphatically with regard to our American tour. It was our own enterprise, financed with our own money, for we never had a backer and we never had an American manager.

When we decided on this enterprise, my husband said to me, "We will back our own luck."

To this end we sent a sum of ten thousand pounds to Messrs. Barclay Brown & Co. to cover the expenses of the tour.

"If we fail," said my husband, "our company will be paid their salaries for the six months for which we have engaged them and will be brought home in accordance with our contract. We can therefore start with the perfect assurance that we have the means of paying all our liabilities. If we fail, we shall have to begin all over again."

At the end of our first six weeks' season, Mr. Cornelius Ralli, who was in Messrs. Barclay Brown's bank in New York, wrote to my husband, "Don't you think that the next time there is a good rate of exchange you had better send back your ten thousand pounds, for you will not need to draw on it while you are in America."

His suggestion was accordingly carried out.

Not knowing the best American theatres for our purpose Mr. Daniel Frohman, with whom my husband had been acquainted for some time, offered to book our tour for us and told us approximately the holding capacity of each theatre.

In return for this service my husband insisted that he should be paid, and they agreed to apportion the sum of two per cent of the profits for this purpose.

At the end of the first tour Mr. Frohman wrote a letter to my husband in which he said, "You know the ropes and do not need me any longer."

In reply my husband wrote this letter. "We can never stand on American soil unless Daniel Frohman takes the theatres for us." We both signed it and Mr. Frohman booked our tours for each of the succeeding tours at the old terms, two per cent of the profits,—never more, never less.

He, however, was never our manager in any sense of the term.

Although so many years have elapsed since then, Mr. Frohman remained our friend and, since my husband's lamented death, my friend, and we exchange letters at not infrequent intervals every year.

When we had been in New York about a week Mr. Daniel Frohman came to me and asked, "Would you like to see one of the prettiest of our girls?"

"Yes, I should," I replied unhesitatingly, for I have always liked to see pretty girls.

Mr. Frohman went on to explain that her name was Mary Nevins Blaine, that she had married the son of the ex-Secretary of State, Mr. James Blaine, and that she was an invalid and in a very depressed condition.

"She has been reading about your coming to New York," Mr. Frohman continued, "and is so crazy to see you that she implored me to get you to call on her."

Call on her I accordingly did and found her as pretty as Mr. Frohman had said. She was lying in bed in a pleasant room the walls of which were covered with pictures. I also found that one leg had been encased in plaster of Paris for six months so that she could not move it, and that she had not been able to use one arm and hand for a long time. It was no wonder she was depressed. She cried easily and told me "God has forgotten me."

"It's your Faith that you have forgotten, not God that has forgotten you," I answered.

I sat and talked with her for a while and, when I got up to go I said, "I'll come back to-morrow morning and see what I can do for you."

She did not believe I should return and made me understand that many English people had disappointed her by promising to go back to see her and not doing so.

The next morning when I arrived, I found that the Irish woman who was her "help," was with her.

On enquiry I learned that her bed had been in the same place for many months, so that her outlook had grown monotonous.

"You have looked at those pictures long enough," I said, pointing to those on the wall opposite her bed. "Your maid and I are going to move your bed to the other side of the room so that you can look at the pictures on the other wall. This afternoon I am going to send you a new coverlet for your bed and this morning I am going to begin washing you in salad oil and brandy."

I got out a new bed jacket for her to wear and I began by brushing her hair; then I rubbed the poor leg which was not in plaster and which was getting bad.

She was very much amused and interested in all I had done, and as I was leaving she asked, "Shall you come back to-morrow morning?"

"Yes," I replied, "I shall. I shall be in New York for two or three weeks more and I shall come every morning and rub you. At the end of that time you will be a very different woman."

Strange as it may appear, although I had been only in New York a week, such was the innate kindness of the people that I was constantly being sent flowers which filled my rooms.

As soon as I got back to our hotel, I wrote to one of the papers and asked the generous American public to discontinue sending me flowers but to substitute for them oil

of swallows, Indian oil, Olive oil and brandy, as I wanted them for a lady in whom I was interested. The public responded in such a way that my husband asked me what had happened to cause me to be the recipient of such apparently useless things. Useless !

I took them all to where they were wanted and used.

At the end of a few days of observation and consideration I determined to break the plaster of Paris and take the leg "out of jail," as I called it.

At that time Mrs. Blaine was being attended by Dr. William Bull, a very distinguished surgeon. When I told him what I proposed doing he asked me where I had studied medicine.

"I have never studied anything in my life," I replied.

He opened his eyes wide and then asked, "Do you know anything about surgery?"

"I do not," I answered unblushingly.

"Yet you intend taking this leg out of plaster of Paris in which a surgeon has placed it?"

"I do," I said.

"Then you'll do it at your own risk," he declared sternly.

"I shall do it at nobody's risk," I answered as sternly as he had spoken.

"Why?" he asked brusquely.

"Because it is common sense and cleanliness, and I have an enormous faith in common sense and cleanliness."

Without more ado, I began to break the plaster. "Remember, you do this on your own responsibility," exclaimed Dr. Bull.

"I do," I replied, without looking up. "I came to America on purpose for this, mingled with my work in the theatre in the evening."

Well, I took the leg out of plaster of Paris and washed it in oil and brandy.

Then I wrapped up the patient in cotton wool and a blanket and said, "You feel more comfortable now, don't you?"

She replied by kissing me.

I won't write what she called me, because "that would be tellings," as the children say.

At the end of my engagement I left New York. When I returned she could stand with the aid of a stick.

Dr. Bull was at that time the man who had the greatest reputation for removing the appendix. I then heard of the operation which was at that time even more "fashionable" than it is to-day.

So skilful was he that patients were actually sent from England in order to be operated on by him. This state of things continued for a long time, for some years later he said to a friend of mine who was visiting New York "What is the matter with your surgeons in England? They seem to be afraid to remove the appendix when they can do it quite as well as I can; yet by Saturday's steamer three people are leaving Liverpool on purpose to come to New York for me to operate on them."

Dr. Bull's professional attendance on Mrs. Blaine developed romantically and eventually they were married.

Having to attend a medical congress in London, he brought her to London and she told the story of how I had treated her to Sir Anderson Critchett, the famous oculist. He used then to chaff me about what I had done and I used to chaff him about what the doctors had not done!

Poor Mary and poor Dr. Bull have both joined the Great Majority, but I still possess, attached to a bracelet, a gold coin on which she had engraved, "Madge from Mary," as a souvenir of our association.

I like to think of her as being happy at the latter end of her life.

She always wanted to go on the stage and become a great actress.

The exigencies of my work and the social engagements which I was compelled to keep prevented me from meeting many of the managers or actors who were prominent in New York at the time.

One of the few whom I did meet was Mr. A. M. Palmer, who impressed me as being more English than any American I ever met. He was a short, sturdy man, who wore grey whiskers and had married as his second wife a fair-haired vivacious woman who rather prided herself on being a skilful amateur actress.

Mr. Palmer was at that time the manager of the Madison Square Theatre which was unique in having two stages, the lower of which descended into the cellar when the upper was being used, and the upper went into the flies when the lower was brought into requisition, by the use of hydraulic power.

In later years Mr. Palmer moved to Wallack's Theatre, the name of which he changed to his own, and carried on the Wallack tradition which also had been his own, of producing English plays, for the most part.

We lunched at his house one day. When the sweets were brought on, his little baby daughter of four or five years old came down and sat next to her father who, to my amazement, gave her a large helping of ice cream.

"Do you like it?" I asked. "And does your papa spoil you in this way?"

"Yes," she answered. "I guess I'm Poppa's angel child."

One of our early tours in America was marred by a terrible tragedy. Just after Christmas my husband came to me with the information that Mr. A. M. Denison, one of the members of our company, had committed suicide by cutting his throat. The shock to my husband and me and to the whole company can be imagined. I cannot describe it.

By a curious coincidence, the doctor who was called in to sign the necessary certificate was a Scotsman named Robertson.

While my husband and his secretary took complete charge of the case, Dr. Robertson called and asked to speak to me alone. He explained that our poor comrade had been suffering from "ambulatory typhoid," a disease which,

while allowing the sufferers to go about their ordinary avocations, affects them mentally. He then made a statement which impressed me deeply.

"Madam," he said, "suicide is a very catching disease among a body or company of people of various temperaments. You must keep all your company together, and beg them on no account to talk to one another about the tragedy."

Dr. Robertson's statement regarding the "catching" qualities of suicide is a fact I have often noticed. Its latest manifestation occurred after the lamented death of Mr. Justice McCardie when attention was drawn to the same fact by two coroners who made exactly the same remark when sitting on suicides which practically repeated the incidents of the judge's death.

For days, until the funeral, following Dr. Robertson's advice, I did everything I could to keep the members of the company cheerful and prevent them becoming morbid over the tragedy which had so suddenly befallen us.

At that time we were playing "Still Waters Run Deep," to receipts running to over four hundred pounds a night.

Despite that fact, my husband closed the theatre on the night of the funeral.

In addition to that loss, it cost my husband one thousand pounds to get poor Denison's remains buried in consecrated ground. His body was clothed in full evening dress, in accordance with the custom which then prevailed in America.

Denison was a very handsome man with curly hair which was then getting grey. On the night they placed his body in the coffin, my husband cut off the curls that clustered round his forehead and brought them to me. I tied them with silk and sent them to his poor parents.

Denison's attractive appearance evidently appealed to the susceptible hearts of certain ladies who attended our performances, for among the papers in his room were many expressing the writers' admiration and even love. These letters were all sealed and returned to the writers.

That is the only way, I think, love letters should be treated, for many love letters have caused grief to others than the writers or the recipients.

Although an important member of the company, Denison invariably played short parts. He once played what I suppose is the shortest part ever written, consisting as it did of one word, "Zo." It was in "The Great Pink Pearl," by Claude Carton and Cecil Raleigh.

The taciturnity of the individual, if my memory is correct, was emphasised by the fact that he was a diplomatist. The fewness of his words got on the nerves of one of the other characters who declared that he would make him speak more than that one word, so he asked, "How do you spell your name?"

Denison put his fingers into the pocket of his waistcoat, drew out his card case and extracting a card with great deliberation handed it to his questioner as he replied, "Zo."

The house rocked with laughter.

That reminds me of another actor in a play called "Blanche," written by Arthur Sketchley, a well-known author of the time, which my husband and I were playing at the Alexandra Theatre, Liverpool.

The plot, like so many plots in those days, was taken from a French play and turned on a woman being falsely accused of poisoning her husband. In the last scene the villain denounces the heroine with the words, "You poisoned your husband. I saw you put the poison in the glass."

Immediately, a black manservant, who had hitherto been silent, advanced and exclaimed, "Liar!"

This time the house rocked with applause.

So great was the effect the actor produced with that one word which came so appositely that he was immediately offered much more important parts and became a leading man.

While such cases do occasionally occur, enabling actors to take enormous leaps forward, many actors of my acquaint-

ance have made reputations by confining themselves to playing small parts only. In Edinburgh, for instance, Mr. Robert Wyndham, the manager of the Theatre Royal, who could, naturally, cast himself for any part he chose, used invariably to appear in a quite subordinate character which he acted with consummate skill.

Actors who confine themselves in this way to particular parts, e.g. servants, become really more valuable to managers than people with greater pretensions. I recall, for instance, an actor long since dead, who so prided himself on his performance of stage butlers that he regarded it as the greatest compliment he had ever received when, on one occasion, a lady said to him, "I never know whether you are my real butler or a butler on the stage."

The first time I ever saw Mrs. Langtry was at a party of Lady Olive Sebright's. She arrived with her husband and her brother, Mr. Le Breton. It must have been her first season in London, for she had on a little plain black frock which, it was said at the time, was her only evening dress. I remember Sir John Millais, Frank Miles and my husband, had eyes for no one else. Indeed, the rest of the women faded like ghosts and were seen no more, so completely did she pervade the room. She had a complexion like a peach, soft and white with a tiny tinge of pink in it,—real, real !

I wonder where in God's great universe she is and what she thinks of the red cheeks, red backs, red legs, red arms, red nails and red lips of the modern woman?

"Is there no chink in the heavens above to look down on the sorrows below?" And such red sorrows !

Her figure was tall and graceful, with her head set wonderfully on her shoulders. She had charming manners and was always delightful to talk to. She was an instant success with all the painters. She might well have quoted, "My face is my fortune, Sir, she said." It was.

Later, as all the world knows, she capitalised her social reputation by going on the stage.

What the world does not know was that it was proposed she should become a member of the Hare and Kendal company at the St. James's. That suggestion, however, was not carried out and she was engaged for the Haymarket under the Bancrofts, where she played in my brother's play "Ours," but in my humble opinion she was no artist. The divine spark had been lighted on her face and there it ended.

The world said at the time that Mr. George R. Sims was inspired by her to write "Ostler Joe," a poem I used often to recite at that time.

Mrs. Brown Potter, another beautiful woman, came to hear me recite it and later did do it herself. I was told she gave an imitation of me in it, but as I never heard her I am not qualified to speak on the point.

When we were contemplating the revival of "All For Her," in New York, the stage manager was instructed to advertise for a number of supers. Among the applications was one that read as follows :

Have you a place for a six-foot man to do a speaking part? Something in the "general utility" line—small part, a villain or clergyman, burglar, hard-hearted father, captain of the guard, captain of the police, etc. Have had experience in either line of business for one entire season in Nashville, Tenn., where I did satisfactory work. Gave up the stage and went into another line of business. Now I would like to return to the stage. Don't know anyone in town, hence this mode of application. Work is what I want—not fun, and if you have an opening for a small heavy part, I am your man.

In Boston we were entertained by Mrs. Jack Gardner, to whose house we were invited to go early one Sunday morning. On our arrival, we were driven in a buggy with the other guests to a club in the country where we had lunch. Later in the afternoon we returned to her house for tea, during which a band played behind a screen of orchids.

After tea which Boston, priding itself on its English habits, had recently introduced, the guests retired to their rooms until dinner was announced at a quarter past eight.

On coming down one noticed that the rooms were perfumed with incense.

All Mrs. Gardner's guests assembled in the hall to await her coming. She wore a dress of beautiful brocade with a band of uncut rubies set in gold around her waist,—in which she was painted by Sargent.

Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes took me in to dinner, during which he spoke to me of Lady Bentinck and her sloping shoulders which he so much admired on the occasion when he visited England, where he had a royal reception.

He had a son who was a judge and he related to me a delightfully humorous conversation they had when, on one occasion, they met in Washington.

"Sir," said the doctor. "I hope your father is well."

"I hope he is," replied the judge.

"Have you heard from him lately?"

"Yes, quite lately."

"And how is he?"

"Quite well."

Then they shook hands and each went his way.

On a subsequent occasion I met Mrs. Jack Gardner in the street. Fastened to her muff she had a bunch of beautiful white violets instead of the parma violets she usually carried.

When I asked her what had induced the change, she replied, "My dear, *c'est la Carême*."

One of her friends told me that she kept four gardeners on purpose to grow those white violets for her.

In Boston I also met the nieces of Mrs. Henry Beecher Stowe. Having played Eva in the dramatisation of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" at both Bristol and Bath as a child, I was quite excited when I met them. They were both very sweet to me and told me all sorts of anecdotes of the negroes in their aunt's time.

So excited was I that the first time I saw a black man with white whiskers in the streets of Boston, finding my

husband had a dollar bill in his pocket I asked him to give it to me and going to the negro I said impulsively, "I'll give you this if you will tell me if you were ever a slave."

"Yes," he replied. "I guess I was!" as he took the bill from my hand.

On one occasion when we were in Boston, a Chinese company was acting there and gave a *matinée* in our honour. What a performance!

The theatre was specially decorated, with a Union Jack in our box, into which the actors threw flowers and money as we entered. I collected the coins, strung them on a ribbon through the hole in the centre and kept them for many years.

The gestures the actors used were remarkable and the music played seemed to be fighting an auditory duel with them; the louder they spoke to drown the music, the louder the music played to drown their voices.

The piece was called "The Birth of the Emperor," who, when he was brought on the stage, looked for all the world like a poll-parrot wrapped in a lace shawl.

After the performance I had to thank the actors for offering one of the greatest compliments ever given to an English actor and actress and the lady star, Madame Sadi, and I indulged in a match of curtsies to each other as the interpreter told her what I had said.

Two of the leading residents in Chicago who entertained us were Mr. and Mrs. McVeagh who lived not in a house but in a palace. He was a very wealthy man whose brother was the United States Ambassador to France.

In the music-room there was a magnificent organ and on the occasion of our visit on a Christmas Eve it was magnificently played on, while someone recited Tennyson's famous poem:

Ring out the old,
Ring in the new;
Ring out the false,
Ring in the true.

Mrs. McVeagh was one of the dearest souls ever permitted to live on earth. Mr. McVeagh, who was a delightful man, had the peculiarity of never being out after six o'clock in the evening, the result of having received some anonymous letters threatening him with death if he did.

During our career on the stage my husband and I frequently received anonymous letters, some of them helpful, some amusing. When we were at the Court Theatre and Mr. Harry Kemble was a member of the company, the similarity in their names used often to cause one to receive a letter intended for the other. Over and over again Mr. Kemble would come to me and say, "You'd better read this before Kendal does ; it'll amuse you. I don't think it can be meant for me." Truth to tell, I don't think it could, for Kemble was short, fat and plain, and my husband was tall, thin and very, very handsome.

If the ladies who write to actors could know how often their literary effusions are laughed at and what fun they cause to the recipients, I am sure they would not write them.

Sometimes, however, such letters excite jealousy. Many of these anonymous letters have been shown to me in the theatre by young actresses and even by the wives of the actors who have asked my advice as to how they should treat them. Such love letters Byron himself could not have surpassed in their intensity and feeling, although he might sometimes have expressed them better.

My first visit to Philadelphia will always awake a poignant note in my memory, for there I nearly met my death.

During a performance I always drank Vichy water, but one night, Odham, who was my maid for seventeen years, unfortunately handed me, by mistake, a glass containing a disinfectant with which I always travelled.

Directly it had passed my lips I knew a mistake had been made.

I managed to get through the scene I had to play, and

my husband, who could read me like a book, saw by my expression that something was wrong with me. Luckily, one of the most celebrated physicians in the city, Dr. Pancoast, was in the theatre. He came round and administered an emetic which enabled me to play till the curtain finally fell, although I was suffering the most excruciating pain. Under his direction I was taken back to the hotel, covered with poultices and for three weeks lived on nothing but the white of egg beaten up with a tablespoonful of champagne.

Every evening I went from bed to the theatre, from the theatre to bed.

Talk about slimming. Any ladies who want to acquire a sylph-like figure need only swallow a disinfectant poison, have it removed as I did and live on white of egg with a tablespoonful of champagne for three weeks. They will be as genteel as regard their figure as they could possibly desire.

Gradually, at the end of that time I returned to my normal food, and how I enjoyed all the beautiful things the Almighty is good enough to send us !

We became very intimate with Dr. Pancoast and his wife and family. She was a host in herself, with a curious, soft, fascinating drawl which every native of the Southern States always possesses.

During my illness, Odham was greatly distressed lest I should die and constantly asked, " Oh, madam, if you die, will they hang me ? "

Eventually, the repetition got on my nerves to such an extent that once when she asked the inevitable question I replied, " Yes, Oddie, I hope they will."

While the slimming process was on, Odham had to take my clothes in every day and, later on, when I had recovered, she had to let them out. This irritated her so much that one day she blurted, " You know, madam, you're a great deal of trouble, and you always will be."

In gratitude for Dr. Pancoast's attention, I went to visit

his hospital. It was on Christmas Day and he asked me how I spent that morning in London.

After church, I told him, I went to the Foundling Hospital to see the children eat their Christmas dinner. Mr. Mommery, the clergyman, knew them all by name and Sir John Monckton, the treasurer to the Foundling, always had several clinging to each finger as he walked about.

Some philanthropic lady had given the electric light to put into the huge doll's house which the girls were allowed to play with. I was taken to see it, and noticing one room without a light in it asked what it was. Rather shocked at my asking, an angel child drew my head down and whispered, "There's no light in it; it's the bathroom."

The Foundling in those days, when it was in Guildford Street, was a place I often visited and nothing could be sweeter than the dear little caps the children wore. At the supreme moment when the children said in unison, "Our Father which art in heaven," they covered their faces with their aprons. It made one feel and understand the prayer.

One day when I was there, a lady dressed in real sables stood watching a little boy eating his Christmas pudding. Her look of sympathy was tinged with something like horror at the pudding which was certainly not too rich. She placed a bag of rather superior sweetmeats by the side of his plate. If a whole regiment of soldiers contradicted me, they could not change my belief, founded on the way she looked at that child, that the lady in the furs was that boy's mother.

When she was going I followed her through the courtyard and she left in a brougham with a coat of arms emblazoned on the door!

Such tiny, fleeting expressions that pass over the face of women and vanish in the flash of an eye taught me all that I tried to do on the stage. It was in those hours of observation that I learnt my work. In making such observations and following up in my imagination the history that

seemed to me to gather round the people, I have suffered all my life, for it is suffering to watch the griefs of others that one cannot help.

When I told that story to Dr. Pancoast, he asked me to give a *matinée* for his hospital, which he invited me to visit.

In going through his ward he was anxious to show me the last great operation he had performed, and when we came to the bedside he pulled the sheet which covered the leg of the patient saying, "Look!"

All I was conscious of was the overpowering smell of iodoform in the dressing. It always takes away my senses and the next moment I was on the floor in a dead faint. When I recovered consciousness Dr. Pancoast exclaimed, "You a woman of courage! You've no courage at all," adding, "You wouldn't do for my profession, for people have to keep their nerves under control."

I had always recognised this lack in myself, although no one admires more than I do the wonderful courage of the women who visit the hospitals and talk cheerily to the patients, or the pretty nurses who attend to them, although I don't always believe in *them*.

While we were acting in Philadelphia, I noticed that one of the private boxes was occupied every night by the same old gentleman. As we were playing the same piece, his presence eventually got on my nerves and I sent for my husband's secretary and said to him, "That old gentleman has sat alone in the box every night since we opened; he knows everything I have done and everything I am going to do and he makes me very nervous. I wish you'd go to him and persuade him to transfer his patronage to one of the other theatres."

In a very little while he came back and said, "I am sorry, Mrs. Kendal, I can't turn him out of the box, for he is the manager's Pop."

The word was new to me forty years ago and it was only then that I learnt that "Pop" is Americanese for papa.

One of the young members of our company was Mr. Harry Nye Chart, whose mother was lessee of the Theatre Royal, Brighton.

In Philadelphia, he developed diphtheria and we were obliged to leave him there.

In order to keep in touch with him and know how he progressed, I made a compact with him that we should each write to the other every day, but in doggerel. We had exchanged many letters when, to my horror and consternation, he told me he had sent them on to his poor mother.

While he was with us he sketched very well. One day, I asked him to do me a sketch of each member of the company to serve as a Christmas card, so that I could hit off their foibles in a humorous way. He did, and brought the sketches to show me. One of them was on transparent paper. He held it up and then I saw that it was his own portrait with his arm around the waist of one of the pretty members of the company.

When I asked what it meant, I found myself enthralled in a most romantic affair. Anything connected with romance always enthralls me!

"Have you told your mother?" was the first question I asked. When he replied that Mrs. Nye Chart knew everything about his feelings I was perfectly happy.

When we got to Boston he came and asked my husband if he would give the dear girl away and if we would come to the wedding. They were married very quietly and have been such a happy couple! They have been through joy and sorrow together, for they lost their only son in the Great War.

During our tour I organised a club among the ladies which I called, "My Unselfish Sewing Bee." They attended the theatre on certain afternoons and mended the socks and gloves of the men of the company, for whom they also made little knickknacks or "housewives."

As I remember, one of the married members of the

company remarked one day, that in my position as Matron of the British Drama I had organised the Club in order to keep the ladies out of mischief.

People always would try to joke at my expense.

In Pittsburg, which a wit once described as "the finest town in the United States—to get away from," for before the universal introduction of electric light it was rather a dirty, grimy place, my husband and I went one evening to a negro church where the coloured clergyman, instead of standing still during the service, walked up and down the platform and asked, "Has anybody here got anything to say to Jesus?"

Whether even that congregation was startled at the unexpectedness of the question I cannot say; I know only that for a time no one replied. Eventually, however, an old lady got up with the words, "Yes, I have something to say."

I cannot remember what she did say, but her manner was so impressive that she affected my husband so strangely and when I looked up I saw the tears glistening in his eyes. He was quite carried away by her simple eloquence. So was I, for it seemed to me that she was actually addressing Our Lord. My husband and I left the church after a most impressive experience and walked slowly back in the snow to our hotel.

When we arrived at Wilkesbarre, which looks like a lovely bit of Switzerland dropped suddenly from the sky, I was assailed by a crowd of women with copies of "Ships that Pass in the Night," which was then enjoying a marvellous success and entreated to autograph each copy.

The book was dedicated to Mr. and Mrs. Kendall and, although the spelling of the name was different, they assumed that my husband and I were they. It was in vain that I assured the good people the book had not been dedicated to us.

It was not only in Wilkesbarre that mistakes were made with regard to our name.

At that time there was an eccentric character actor

named Ezra Kendall who had been playing in "A Pair of Kids" for several years and had a great following. When we appeared in Toledo, Iowa, a man left his seat at the end of the first act and seeking out the manager asked when Kendall was coming on.

"Mr. Kendal has already appeared," replied the manager.

The man shook his head, "Don't tell me that man was Kendall, fur I know better. Haven't I heerd him lots of times. Say, I think Ezra is the funniest feller goin'. When he comes out and says, 'I ain't sayin' a wurd,' seems to me I'd die. An' when he gits his feet into them slippers 'st nailed to the floor and says 'I'm paralysed,' that's actin'.' As your man ain't my Kendall I want my money back."

And he got it.

In another town, while my husband was superintending the setting of a scene, the German leader of the orchestra came to me and asked in a sharp tone, "Vy, dot is a queer shape to do tings in such a slipshod vay, ain't it? Nefer in all my experiences ish dot done so, nefer, und I don' likes it for ein cent."

"What don't you like?" I asked, "for I don't understand. What's wrong?"

He exclaimed indignantly, "Here! vat sort of a vay is dis to do 'show pisness' anyway? It is now fife o'clock und I ain't got no music of der performance. Vat you tink I do, eh? Blay it out of mein head, maybe, ain't it? City peoples can do dat sometimes, but in countries I want rehearsals."

"Why, what does all this balderdash mean?" asked Mr. Kendal indignantly.

"Mean!" cried the musician. "Vat it means! Vy it means dat if you vish to sing your songs and ballads and choruses to-night ve must rehearse der music previous, don't it? Der show can't go on without der music, and no music can be played if we don't know it."

At that moment the local manager came up and informed the conductor that we were not the minstrel troupe that

was booked to perform on the following night, and his services were not required, as the orchestra was not needed except between the acts when it would play under the stage.

Once when we were acting in New Orleans, the way to the stage door, which was by the gallery entrance, was so packed with the crowd waiting for the early doors that it was impossible for me to get into the theatre that way.

I accordingly went to the front of the house and, as I was going through, one of the men stopped me saying, "You can't go through the front of the house, madam."

"But I am a member of the company."

"I can't help that. What's your name?"

"Mrs. Kendal."

He batted an incredulous eye at me, "Ah, ah, I dare say, but my orders are my orders, and you must go through the stage door."

It was in vain I explained to him that the crowd prevented my doing so. I had to sit down and wait for a quarter of an hour until my husband's secretary arrived, as, happily, he always did early, when he gave the necessary assurance to the unbelieving official.

During our early tours in America I had to submit at not infrequent intervals to be interviewed. The strangest experience of the kind happened when I was on a one night stand.

A young man, very thin, rather untidy, appeared and taking his notebook and pencil out of his pocket began by asking me whether my husband and I were really professional actors and had ever acted in London.

After I had satisfied his curiosity on these points, the naïveté of some of his questions so amused me that I said I thought I would like to interview him.

"You don't seem to know much about the theatre ; do you ?"

"No," he replied, "you see, this is the first time I have ever had to interview an actress."

"What do you usually do, then?"

"I write about murderers."

"Murderers! Oh, most interesting. How do you go about it?"

"As soon as they are condemned, I go to the prison and get all the information I can about them, see them and talk to them if I am allowed to, and keep in close touch with them until they are executed."

I was glad when I brought my interview to an end.

How we roared with laughter, and how, after a good tea, he looked better and seemed easier in his mind and heavier in his stomach.

Travelling in America with such an organisation as ours was an expensive business. On our first visit to San Francisco, whither we went from Chicago, the return tickets for the members of the company and the servants amounted to one thousand five hundred pounds in English money.

My husband was on the point of writing a cheque when I stopped him.

"I really must see these railway tickets paid in cash," I said. "It will be a unique experience." I accordingly accompanied my husband and his secretary to the station where we were received in an office by an official who continually spat into a cuspidor.

(I acknowledge in parenthesis that it is not a pretty thing to write about, but I record it for what follows.)

Addressing him, I said, "When I first came to this country, I did not know the use for which cuspidors were designed and I put flowers in them. I notice you spit in yours. Why?"

"Why, madam?" he iterated. "That's to show my Goddam independence."

The attitude of the conductors on some of those trains in the west was hardly what we expected and quite different from that of our own officials of the same class.

Actors were, in those days, regarded from quite a different standpoint from that which prevailed in England.

I remember once we were to travel from St. Joseph, Missouri, and were waiting for the train to come in at 1 a.m. When it arrived, the conductor entered the waiting-room and cried, "Is this the gang? Load 49."

On another occasion, the conductor entered and asked, "Are all the Indians in?"

I tell these stories of America with a keen sense of their humour, for I owe the Americans much for the hospitality and the goodness they showed, no, showered on me. Sometimes, however, when I recall these things, I laugh heartily.

One night in the train on our way to California, I became something like a Christy minstrel.

I was travelling with a guitar for "Clancarty," and one of the coloured men came to me and said, "Miss Kendal, you play de banjo?"

When I said I did, he said, "We play de banjo togedder den to-night after dinner."

He duly appeared with the conductor of the Pullman car with his banjo and the under-conductor with the "bones." I got down my guitar and they tuned their banjos to it. We played and sang all the famous American tunes, with the result that gradually the members of the company came out of their compartments and the people in the neighbouring carriages put their heads out of the window and they all joined lustily in the chorus.

It was the first time I ever saw glow-worms. They seemed to make the trees alive and were quite as bright as any electric lamps. This and the croaking of the frogs when we were crossing the prairies were things I could scarcely imagine. My husband would hardly believe they really were frogs. One of the men got out of the train and brought one in. It made such a noise that we were glad to throw it out again.

Mr. Herbert Cathcart, our stage manager, conceived the idea that he would be a business man. He, therefore, bought six crocodiles and said they would travel with us till they grew up, when he would sell them to the Zoo.

During the evening, however, the crocodiles being, I presume, of the male order, wished to see the ladies and got out of the basket in which they had been packed. When one of our young actresses saw them on the floor of the carriage she screamed so that the whole of the people in the car got awakened and Mr. Cathcart had to gather all the crocodiles he could find and throw them back on to the prairie.

When we arrived in San Francisco, the Chief of Police called at the Palace Hotel, where we were staying, to inform us that an epidemic of measles was raging in Chinatown and that on no account should any of the members of our company go there, although it was then one of the chief sights of the city. As we went to the theatre in the evening, I mentioned this to the ladies and gentlemen, and Seymour Hicks, taking on himself to be spokesman said, "Ma K., we should not dream of doing such a thing."

He was the youngest member of our company at the time and he always took a delight in addressing me as "Ma K."

With Seymour Hicks's assurance I was perfectly satisfied, but my satisfaction was short lived, for a few days later he developed measles,—such measles !

Having nursed my own five children through the disease, I had no difficulty in recognising the rash, without a physician's diagnosis. The patient was put to bed where he remained during the whole of our stay in San Francisco, while my maid and I went twice every day to see him.

I also prohibited the ladies of the company to go near him but,—I relate it with great regret,—they all went every afternoon !—for he was an exceedingly popular young man. At that time he knew but one comic song—"Put me among the girls,"—and he sang it very often !

During our American tours, as well as before and after, I was constantly asked my opinion on the stage as a profession for women,[†] as well as whether I would allow my own daughters to become actresses.

I always replied in the same terms which I can best state by quoting a letter I wrote on March 4th, 1890, apropos the fact that Messrs. Little Brown & Co., of Boston, proposed to print an American edition of my "Dramatic Opinions," which had been originally published by Messrs. John Murray.

Note the date, please !

" TO MY CHILDREN,

I am sure you will be glad to hear I am having my "Dramatic Opinions" published in book form.

It is really most gratifying to think the public wishes to know my ideas of anything, and I can only hope in reading them that some other little girls and boys will find some bits of experience to amuse them or advice to guide them should they ever think of following the theatrical profession.

I am often asked if I wish either of you to go upon the stage, and, as you know, my reply is always the same,—yes, certainly, if they possess sufficient talent ! (for talent you must have to begin with) supported by industry, perseverance, good health, strength of mind, and last, though not least, a little modesty as to your own merits.

This is the form of diploma you require to sign to win the admiration and respect of the public which, when won and won worthily, is the greatest honour we can hope to gain.

Your devoted mother,

MADGE KENDAL."

The ages of my children at that time were 17, 16, 14, 12 and 9 respectively. One of the dominant reasons which had induced me previously to forgo the invitations we had received to visit the United States was that I would not consent to leave home for any length of time until the youngest had reached an intelligent age when she could state accurately her feelings and sensations if she were ill.

In replying to the question regarding my views as to the necessary qualifications a young woman should have

for a successful career on the stage, I invariably summed them up in the following manner :—the face of Venus, the figure of Juno, the brains of Minerva, the memory of Macaulay, the chastity of Diana, the grace of Terpsichore but, above and beyond all, the *hide* of a rhinoceros.

CHAPTER XIV

HOME AGAIN

THE year 1892 made theatrical history, for in it Sir Arthur Pinero's "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray" was produced at the St. James's Theatre and was said to make a new departure in the Drama. It also made the reputation of Mrs. Patrick Campbell.

Naturally, as the work of the author, it interested me profoundly and although, in the phrase of the time, Mrs. Tanqueray was a lady who had "frayed the hem of her petticoat," my husband bought the play and decided to undertake another American tour and make it the *pièce de résistance* of our programme.

It was therefore included in the short provincial tour which was to precede the American venture and on August 31st, 1893, we gave it at Leicester for the first time. As might be expected, many of the London critics went down to see it and Mr. William Archer wrote :

What of Mrs. Kendal's reading of the part of Paula ? It is the work of an accomplished comedian, who has at her command all the resources of her art. Comparisons are odious ; and I do not propose to compare Mrs. Kendal with Mrs. Patrick Campbell except on one point. She certainly puts a greater depth of feeling into the later acts, and on the whole (I should say) she does rightly.

The idea which animated my performance was Paula's wild desire to meet Tanqueray's daughter, that innocent dove, fresh from the convent, who had never seen anything wrong and whom she regarded as something of an angel from heaven.

I tried to get into my face the admiration one might



MR. AND MRS. KENDAL IN "THE SECOND MRS. TANQUERAY,"
ACT I

express in the words, "Oh, if I could be like you." When I did meet Ellean and touched her hand, I taught the actress to draw her hand away and move aside, as if she felt instinctively the difference between her and her stepmother.

Mrs. Tanqueray's yearning desire to make this beautiful young creature love her, to hide from her that she had ever done anything wrong, her nervousness in her presence were all facets in the character I tried to bring out. The culminating point of this wretched woman's punishment came when she recognises that the man who has come to the house as the girl's lover is really one with whom she (Paula) "had kept house." From that moment she knows her life is over and she realises she must, herself, tell the awful tragedy to Tanqueray.

In order to realise the situation, my hand, falling by chance on a mirror, I took it up to see if Paula's past was already written on her face. It was. With every expression of grief and horror I put down the mirror and, as the tears welled into my eyes, I began to sob until the curtain fell, in silence.

In this play, as in "The Squire" and "The Weaker Sex," Sir Arthur Pinero gives every actress her chance.

I have never been able to understand how he got into a woman's heart as he did, but he did. No actress could fail in those parts.

The impression my performance made on Mr. George Gray, who was at that time a member of our company, can be judged from the statement I quote from his *Vagaries of a Vagabond*.

Mrs. Kendal was, and will ever remain, my ideal—the greatest actress I have ever seen. In the present generation her equal has not been reached. It is a great pity that London never had the opportunity of seeing her as "Paula" in "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray." In the last act, alone on the stage, looking at herself in a hand mirror, her great art was fully revealed; for two long minutes she gazed, real tears welling into her eyes and coursing down her cheeks. No words were spoken, but the eyes transmitted to the audience the mind's unspoken thoughts; at the end of each performance came a transport of enthusiasm.

He also very kindly dedicated his book to me "with affectionate reverence and esteem," and asked me to write a foreword.

This is the foreword I wrote :

DEAR MR. GRAY,

You ask for my Savage fraternal blessing for your book. I give it willingly and for many reasons. Because you *are* a Savage, the only really civilised club in existence. I am your "chieftess" and I can recognise your allegiance to that community and in the theatre. Your enthusiasm there was enthusiasm and it has helped many ;—a fighting person as well as a Fighting Parson.

I am glad you were happy while with us.

The memorial to my beloved husband's memory grows greater each day and hour and by his Brother Actors,—for *no one* has yet ventured (after many years) to play one of the various rôles he essayed.

As regards your eulogy of myself, no one could—or should—or will believe it, so it shall be printed !

It can do no harm and is a beautiful tribute of comradeship.

At that time there seemed to be a desire on the part of several people for forewords by me, among them being Miss Ellaline Terriss and Mr. J. G. Graham, who had played William III in "Clancarty" with us.

After our return from America, my husband, with his acute perception, became conscious of the changing conditions in the theatre, with the result that we spent most of our time touring, with occasional seasons at the Avenue, The Garrick and the St. James's Theatres.

Of the plays we produced in those years preceding our retirement the three most notable were undoubtedly "The Elder Miss Blossom," "The Likeness of the Night," and "The Silver Shell," a revised version of the play we originally produced called "Prince Karatoff."

"The Likeness of the Night" was written by the late Mrs. W. K. Clifford, the widow of the famous mathematician, who was the only other woman, beside Mrs. Beringer, with whose work I was associated.

After my husband had read it, he said to me, "I shall produce this play."

"I think it is too melancholy," I replied, "and I don't believe the public will take to the last act."

"I don't care what I lose on it," returned my husband, "I shall produce it."

And very well he did produce it. The ship scene alone cost, I believe, a large sum. It was realistically done, with the inherent bustle of the last minutes of a ship ready to sail,—luggage being brought aboard and taken to the cabins, stewards moving rapidly to and fro and so on.

In this play there was a remarkable lesson which all young married women should take to heart, for it revealed the mistake the woman I played had made in her early married life. Mrs. Acheson, on parting with her husband, reminded him that, when they were first married, he had brought her some lilies and she had never thanked him for them.

"It doesn't matter," he replies.

"Oh, yes," she answers, "it does matter. I wish I had thanked you, as I had wanted to, *then*. If I had thanked you enthusiastically, things might have been different between us."

Acheson had fallen so far away from her that he was in love with another and a younger woman who was already his mistress.

In their parting, he expressed the hope that the voyage she was undertaking would do her good.

I have said this scene is a remarkable lesson for young wives, and for this reason,—all young wives, when their husbands bring them flowers, should certainly be more enthusiastic than Mrs. Acheson. Taking things as a matter of course is invariably the way of a wife, but a wife should always remember there is, or may be, another woman in the background who goes into ecstasies when flowers are brought to *her*.

In the last act, Acheson has married his mistress and they are celebrating their wedding day when a sailor

calls to give him a letter which he had been unable to deliver before, as he had been ill and in hospital after an accident.

Acheson looks at the envelope and recognises the writing of his first wife. When he reads the letter he realises that what Banquo's ghost was to Macbeth, his dead wife's letter is to him,—his Nemesis that he will have to pass the rest of his life with the woman he has already begun to despise.

It was this episode of his punishment in his second marriage which prevented the success of the play when we did it *but which the public would overlook now*.

The beautiful Marchioness of Ripon came often to see the play. There was something in it which attracted her strongly, but she would never tell me what it was.

Speech is given to us to hide our thoughts, but silent suffering can be depicted on the stage.

In my own life I have gone through much suffering and I have, therefore, learnt in the hardest school of all the methods of depicting it.

Now the funny side of life jumps up again.

When we were rehearsing this play a very clever actress played the second Mrs. Acheson.

"I don't like her teeth," Mrs. Clifford said to me one day. "They are too prominent. Can't she have a new set?"

"Well, Mrs. Clifford," I replied, "it's a little difficult. She's been with us for some months and as her teeth are her own, I don't think she would care to have the two front ones extracted, although she is playing a fine part in your play."

The first Mrs. Acheson was a very difficult part for me to act and I confess I gave an imitation of a friend who could make everybody love her *but* her husband.

At the St. James's, the second Mrs. Acheson was acted by Lady Tree, who had been brought to my husband by W. S. Gilbert to act in "The Hobby Horse." In this her

freshness and naïveté just suited the part for which she was cast.

In those days she had a most profound respect for the actor's profession. She was a very talented woman and before she went on the stage had taught mathematics, Greek and Latin at Queen's College. It was then that she fell madly in love with Herbert Beerbohm Tree and her ambition, when they were married, was that they should act together.

She rather thought in those days that being on the stage was something of a game. She soon discovered, however, that work at the theatre began at 10.30 a.m. and ended at 11.30 p.m.

On one occasion she was called on to play at short notice a part which had been acted by Lady Monckton, who was a much older woman.

In the company was Mr. Harry Kemble, who said to her, "If you will come to me, I will tell you everything about the part and give you all the wrinkles."

"Wrinkles!" replied Mrs. Tree, bridling. "Don't talk to me about wrinkles. Go away to the other side of the stage and stop there. Wrinkles, indeed."

In those days Lady Tree did not know that "wrinkles" is the term we apply to the little bits of stage business which give finish to a part and not the indelible marks which come on our forehead, whether we like it or not.

"The Elder Miss Blossom," which provided me with one of my most successful and popular parts, was written by two men who were members of our company, the late Ernest Hendrie and Mr. Metcalfe Wood.

True, the play was written before they came to act with us, for it was finished when they were playing with an English company in Washington. They deliberately set to work with me in their mind for the leading part which, as they conceived it, was a high comedy character.

At that time I was in a very sad frame of mind and I therefore tinged the part with sentiment, instead of humour.

Fearing that I was wrong and not doing justice to the authors by this change in their viewpoint, I asked the members of the company to go in front one day as I intended to act the part as if I were playing it before an audience.

"Divest your hearts and minds that I am Mrs. Kendal," I said, "and remember only that I am a comrade. I want you to hiss my performance if I don't convince you by my impersonation, as I want you to applaud if I do."

To that little band of people I played for all I was worth. To my astonishment the company, including the authors, applauded my efforts and settled my performance for good and all.

Both Ernest Hendrie, to whom my husband left all our plays "in affectionate remembrance of our association," and Metcalfe Wood were excellent comrades and friends, and we were a very jolly party in those days.

One day I was invited to a club whose members numbered many women authors, to one of whom I was introduced, for I admired her work very greatly. She was, I think, the most untidy woman I ever encountered and had a head of hair which I shall never forget. I think it was the most unkempt that I have ever seen.

Some time later I received another invitation and as a special enticement I was told that the lady whose work I admired so much was going to be present. I mentioned it to Metcalfe Wood, saying, "I can't go, for I don't want to see Miss — again. I'm sure she has mice in her hair."

"Never mind that," said Metcalfe Wood, "take a trap." He was always clever at repartee like that.

Miss Blossom furnished me with a strange experience.

After a matinée performance in one of the chief cities, a message was brought to me that a lady who was anxious to see me was waiting at the stage door. I sent my maid to ask her to excuse me as I was tired and had to rest in order to be fresh for the evening performance.

My maid returned with the information that the lady said she would wait until she did see me as it was a matter of grave importance, although she would not detain me for more than a few minutes. To save time I said I would see her.

When she came into my room I saw she was a woman past middle age and in a great state of excitement.

She demanded to know how I had become possessed of her life story and how I had dared to make a play of it.

I had a good deal of difficulty in persuading her that the authors could not have known anything about her history and she went away pacified.

I could not help thinking, however, how foolish it was of her not to have suffered in silence rather than to have given away the secret of her life.

After I had played "The Elder Miss Blossom," Sydney Grundy wrote the following letter to me on December 4th, 1898.

"DEAR MRS. KENDAL,

I have heard so much regret expressed by the younger members of the profession who *have never seen you* that even now that you are back in London they have no chance, in consequence of themselves being engaged at matinées on Wednesdays and Saturdays, that I venture to suggest to you that it would be not only a kindly, but a politic thing to give one matinée on another day and let as many of them in as you can spare room for. When one arrives at our time of age (don't snort, March 1848) the opinion of the young people is more important than that of the old people ; they are Posterity and I know they are prepared to receive you as a divinity and a revelation. Now, I have been implored with clasped hands to ask this favour of you. And I ask you boldly, because such art as yours belongs not only to yourself, but to the whole profession out of which it springs and to which you ought to bequeath as much of it as you can.

This is much better charity than damned needlework nonsense and babies' napkins. Isn't it,

Always sincerely yours,

SYDNEY GRUNDY."

"The Silver Shell" was written by an American settled in London, Mr. H. J. W. Dam.

How I rejoiced in that author's name! It used to give me the opportunity of using the strongest expression without incurring the disapprobation of those people who object to swearing.

Incidentally it led to my meeting Mr. George Gray, who was a great friend of Mr. George P. Huntley, also a member of our company.

"The Silver Shell" brings to my mind the recollection of an incident which throws a light on what I may call impulse in acting.

In one scene I had to part with my child, after telling his nurse to take him away.

It was a heartrending scene, the child she might never see again! I kissed him madly on cheeks, forehead, head, hands.

The actress who played the nurse was very nervous and in taking the child away she managed, somehow, to knock off the cap and it fell on the ground. Whether she did not notice it or whether she was afraid of delaying the scene by stopping to pick it up I cannot say, but she did go off and left it lying there.

As the door closed and I saw the cap, I gave one look of horror, snatched it up and hid it among the folds of my dress with such a look of relief that the audience saw I had saved the situation and broke out into such prolonged applause that my husband came to the wings and asked what was the matter.

When the curtain fell, he said to me, "You'll have to do that business every night."

I shook my head. "No," I said, "I can't do that, it

would be impossible. What I did to-night I did on the impulse of the moment."

"You are quite right," he replied. "Always follow your first impulse. Don't believe that second thoughts are best ; second thoughts are generally worse."

In criticising this play when we produced it at the Avenue Theatre, Mr. William Archer, impressed by the tragedy of the part I was playing, wrote : " If we are to have a Lady Macbeth, a Volumnia, a Constance in the present generation, Mrs. Kendal is the woman. Having been our Mrs. Jordan, why shouldn't she become our Mrs. Siddons? "

After a lapse of many years I met Mr. George Gray again under rather unusual circumstances.

When I had been left a widow for some eight or ten years, I thought I would like to send two tokens of remembrance to the Savage Club of which I am the only woman to enjoy the distinction of having been elected a member.

I therefore wrote to Mr. C. E. Lawrence, who was the Hon. Secretary at the time, and said I would like to give a portrait of Charles Kemble as Hamlet which my husband had bought, as he was told the head and face had been painted by Sir Thomas Lawrence, and a sepia drawing by my husband of my brother Tom, in a small frame, as he was one of the founders of the Club.

Like the kind man he was, Mr. Lawrence replied that the Club would be glad to receive both pictures and asked what day I would come to present them. On the appointed day the Hon. Mrs. Ionides, the daughter of Lord Bearsted, accompanied me.

I was received at the door by a dear member who presented me with a bouquet, tied with the colours of the Savage Club ; he said to me, " Do you remember me? "

" Yes, indeed, I do," I replied without a moment's hesitation. " You are Mr. Harker and you were the scene painter at the Haymarket when I played Galatea, and that was in 1871."

We had never met since I left that theatre.

I was then taken upstairs into the chief room of the Club where I saw hundreds and hundreds of men.

I then asked them to accept the two pictures in remembrance of two former members and, as I spoke, I recalled how my brother Tom had used the Club as a background for an incident in his play, "Society," when one of the members asks another to lend him five shillings.

I had one of the most glorious receptions of my life and, at the end of my speech, one of the members greeted me with the exclamation, "Why don't you go back to the stage? If you do, I will go back too."

I recognised the voice instantly. It was that of Mr. George Gray, who, as the Fighting Parson, had, in the meantime, made an enormous success throughout the United Kingdom and had retired to Jersey, where he now lives.

The way I had become a Savage was this.

We had not been married quite a year when, one night, after we had left the theatre, my husband took me to Evans's famous supper-room near Covent Garden in order that I might get a glimpse of a characteristic phase of London life.

Instead of the eggs and bacon and the fashionable kipper of the modern cabaret where I am told these viands are regarded both as *de luxe* and *de rigueur*, the patrons regaled themselves with hot chops and hot roast potatoes, while an excellent choir sang carols and quartettes.

Although it was supposed to be rather a daring thing for a woman to do in those days, there was a chairman with a hammer who kept order and preserved decorum in the room.

When we came out after supper, there was a tremendous crowd in the street. My husband told me to hold on to the tails of his coat and he would push through the crowd, so that, by following close to his heels, I should get through without any trouble.

I held on so tight, I thought, when the crowd began to

separate, that the tails of his coat would come off in my hand.

They did not, but my hands got separated from the coat-tails and I found myself surrounded by strangers in half a minute.

I got a little nervous, but I still went on following in the direction in which my husband was going. Presently, I lost sight of him entirely and at that moment I saw a light over a doorway, and pushing open the door I found myself in a room in which a number of men were smoking long clay pipes.

I was very frightened when, suddenly, to my amazement, one of them got up and said, "Miss Robertson, what brings you here?" It was Sydney Grundy in whose plays, later on, we were to act and help him to win his distinguished place among the dramatists of his time.

"Oh, I have lost my husband," I replied.

What a fool they must have thought me!

"We'll soon find him for you," said Grundy in a cheery voice. "Sit down and dry your eyes."

With that, he left me among the men who, I soon discovered, were members of the Savage Club into which I had so unceremoniously made my entrance.

In a few minutes Grundy returned with my husband, who wanted to know why I had let go of his coat-tails.

My husband, who had been a member of the Club for several years, was received very warmly with, "Hullo, Kendal," and some chaffing remarks like, "You must take better care of your wife," and, "You aren't used to doing that yet."

Following the precedent of the woman who, inadvertently, overheard and oversaw what took place in a masonic lodge and was at once initiated into the mysteries of Freemasonry, one of the men proposed that, as I was the first woman who had entered those Bohemian precincts, I should be elected a member of the Savage Club. The proposal was carried by acclamation and I signed the

membership book which Mr. Vernon Woodhouse, the present honorary secretary, has informed me has been lost.

Having been elected, my health was proposed and the assembled members drank it enthusiastically in whisky and water.

A four-wheeled cab was summoned and we drove home.

This incident of a woman making her way into a club was afterwards used by Sydney Grundy himself in his play, "The Old Jew," which Sir John Hare produced and played in.

Our retirement from the stage was a very quiet one, as we always intended it to be, for, as will have been gathered from what I have said, my husband never employed a press agent to bang the big drum to call attention to what we were doing. It would not be an exaggeration to say that, like the Arab, "we folded our tents and silently stole away."

When my husband and I decided to retire we told the members of the company six months before the end of the tour that they might make themselves as happy and as comfortable as circumstances would allow them to do.

We were animated by this desire as our company had become linked in a bond of comradeship which often developed into close friendship through my husband's desire to keep the same actors around us.

In accordance with this custom we had one lady with us for eleven years. She came as a young girl to play small parts and advanced until she was undertaking the next parts to me and earning an admirable income. She was very good-looking and very much admired. One man in particular used to follow the company about in order to see her. I did not know him then and did not see him, as I was only told of the circumstances.

When we told the lady in question of our intention she came to me and said, "Do you really mean, Mrs. Kendal, to retire, for if you do, I think I shall marry the man who has often asked me."

"Is this the man who, I have been told, follows the company about?" When she replied in the affirmative I said, "I'd like to see him."

He was produced.

After we had discussed the *pluie* and the *beau temps*, I came out bluntly with, "What are you prepared to settle on this lady? For the last five years she has been in a position of independence and has been able to help her own people."

Before he replied, my husband said, "This young lady has been with us for eleven years and has behaved admirably. As she has no parents, only sisters, I wish her to be married from our own house."

She was; the Reverend Archibald Boyd Carpenter of Bloomsbury Church performed the ceremony.

This, however, is anticipating events. At the interview I have mentioned, the fortunate young man asked if I would take his fiancée to his parents' house and introduce her to them and he would ride out and meet us there.

With his fiancée I drove to his parents' house, but there was no horseman waiting to support us with his presence. Nothing daunted, however, I knocked at the door and his father and mother received us with great kindness of heart but with evident fear of both of us.

I tried to reassure them and congratulated them on having a daughter-in-law possessed with both beauty and brains.

The young man's mother invited us to have some wine and cake, and the poor girl was so nervous that she left the house with a piece of cake between her finger and thumb!

Later, we met my friend the horseman some miles away from the house.

The bride elect came to stay with us, and the night before the wedding there arrived for her a very handsome muff and stole of real sable.

I told my husband that I was a little unhappy, for the sables were very handsome and must have cost a large

sum of money, and I hoped the young man was not running into debt.

"My dear," replied my husband, "he belongs to the City and gets everything at half price."

Our wedding party was a very happy one, formed of the bridegroom's father and mother and the brothers and sisters on both sides.

One day, a few months after they had been married, a victoria with a very good horse drove up to our house. The coachman brought a letter from the young husband in which he said it was his wife's birthday and would I drive up to their house in the victoria and horse he had bought for her. Oddly enough, I recognised the coachman as a manservant who had lived for years with the people opposite to us in Harley Street.

I got into the victoria and was driven to the house, where I found the happy couple standing on the doorstep, full of smiles, to greet me.

A year later, the husband again turned up at our house; this time with his pockets full of brooches set with diamonds wrapped in pieces of tissue paper, and asked me to choose the one I liked the best. I did. It was the most expensive.

"It's the anniversary of my wife's birthday," he again explained, "and I want your help in selecting her present."

"I don't understand this at all," I told him. "Are you a humbug and a very rich man, or are you not?"

I shall never forget his expression as he said, "Mrs. Kendal, I wish to be loved for myself alone. I am better off than when I first met you."

"I am delighted to hear it," I said, "because my husband tells me that being in the City you get everything at half price."

He roared with laughter and declared, "It's not true about the City of London."

I lost my dear friend some years ago. In accordance with her wish she is buried near the grave in which my husband and I will lie at Finchley.

CHAPTER XV

THE ELEPHANT MAN

IN 1886 the sympathies of both my husband and myself were deeply stirred by a case which attracted a considerable amount of attention and is known in medical annals as "The Elephant Man."

His name was John Merrick and his deformity was so terrible that Sir, then Mr., Frederick Treves, who had charge of the case when, later, it was admitted to the London Hospital, has described him in the following terms :

He was the most disgusting specimen of humanity that I have ever seen in the course of my profession. I had come upon lamentable deformities of the face due to disease as well as mutilations and contortions of the body depending on the like cause, but at no time had I met with such a degraded or perverted version of a human being as this lone figure displayed.

In spite of this, he was exhibited as a monstrosity near the hospital until the show was banned in London, when he was taken to Brussels and shown to the public until the police again interfered. Then he was given a ticket to London and arrived at Liverpool Street with only a few shillings in his pocket, having been so shunned that he could get nothing to eat or drink on the journey.

The chance that he had been seen professionally by Mr. Treves before he was sent to Brussels and still had that gentleman's card in his possession caused the distinguished surgeon to be sent for.

According to the statement in Sir Frederick's book, *The Elephant Man*, he had Merrick transferred from the station to a bed in the attic of the London Hospital.

As I have noted in the chapter dealing with my husband, he had, as a youth, begun to train for the medical profession and was not infrequently offered the opportunity of seeing interesting cases by Sir John Bland-Sutton.

Another friend was Mr. Wardell Cardew, who, after Merrick's arrival, said to my husband, "I have had the most awful case in my care in Ostend; would you care to see it?"

My husband saw Merrick at the London Hospital and on coming home I asked him, as usual, whether he had enjoyed himself there seeing the doctors and patients.

"No," he replied. "I have not. I have seen the most fearful sight of my life."

"Don't tell me about it," I replied.

"The extraordinary thing," declared my husband, "is that out of the distorted frame came the most musical voice."

It so affected him that he could hardly speak. When he recovered, he told me that Mr. Cardew had said they would never allow Merrick to be in the hospital permanently, although he ought to be there, as it was not fit that he should be seen in public.

"Wouldn't they let him remain in the hospital," I asked, "if the money were raised to pay for his keep?"

I did raise the money and no one knew anything about my association with the case until the money was obtained and Merrick was duly installed in two rooms, one furnished as a bed-sitting-room and the other as a bathroom.

Much of the rest of the story I quote from Sir Frederick Treves.

So distorted was Merrick's face that he always wore a mask with two slits in it for his eyes. In the hospital he learned to read and, in spite of his terrible affliction which might well have distorted his mind and made him everything that was vile, Sir Frederick Treves states that his troubles ennobled him and "made him as gentle, affectionate, loveable and amiable as a happy woman, free from

any trace of cynicism or resentment, without a grievance and without an unkind word for anyone."

This man who had been treated as loathsome by everyone was visited, one day, by a woman who smiled at him and shook his hand, treatment which so amazed him that he bent his head to his knees "and," wrote Sir Frederick, "sobbed till I thought he would never cease."

From that time his transformation commenced and he began to change, little by little, from a hunted being into a man. Her Majesty Queen Alexandra went to the hospital to pay him a visit, a kindness which marked every act of her life. Again I quote Sir Frederick :

The Queen entered Merrick's room smiling, and shook him warmly by the hand. Merrick was transported with delight. This was beyond even his most extraordinary dream.

The Queen made many people happy, but I think no gracious act of hers caused such happiness as she brought into Merrick's room when she sat in a chair and talked to him as an ordinary person she was glad to see.

His burning ambition, as related by Sir Frederick, was to go to the theatre. A pantomime was running at Drury Lane, but how so conspicuous a being as he was to be got there, how he was to see the performance without attracting the notice of the audience and causing an unpleasant sensation was the problem.

The whole matter [and I again quote Sir Frederick's words] was most ingeniously carried through by that kindest of women and greatest of actresses, Mrs. Kendal. She made the necessary arrangements with the lessee of the theatre and a box was obtained.

I went to see the Baroness Burdett-Coutts and asked her to let me have the use of her box for the purpose. The Baroness asked if I would be responsible for what might happen to any woman who might see Merrick. I assured her that such arrangements would be made that no one would see him either going to and from the theatre or while he was in the box.

This undertaking was scrupulously carried out, for Sir Frederick writes :

Merrick was brought in a carriage with drawn blinds and allowed to make use of the royal entrance and so to reach the royal box by the private stairs. Three of the hospital sisters in evening dress sat in the front row to "dress" the box and form a screen, and Merrick and I were at the back. He was awed and enthralled.

He died in his sleep in April 1890, and, summing him up, Sir Frederick pays this remarkable tribute to this unfortunate creature :

while as a specimen of humanity Merrick was ignoble and repulsive, the spirit of Merrick, if it could be seen in the form of the living, would assume the figure of an upstanding man, sympathetic, proud and clean, and living with eyes that flashed courage.

What greater epitaph could be written of any man, however endowed by Nature with beauty of face and form.

My husband and I always considered it a great privilege to be allowed to soothe his suffering. He was most appreciative of everything I had done for him and expressed his gratitude in several letters to me. After his death, I returned them to the London Hospital that they might be preserved with any other relics relating to him. Enquiries made when writing this account revealed, however, that these letters are no longer extant, but in the museum in which his skeleton hangs there is preserved a beautiful model of a Gothic church which he made and presented to me and I thought should be preserved by the hospital.

At one time Merrick wrote to me that he would like to learn basket work and when I arranged for him to be taught he sent me the first basket he ever made. His love for music I fostered by giving him one of the early gramophones which worked by hand and as I could not go to see him he asked me for several photographs which I duly sent.

His Majesty King Edward went to see him and when, in after years, the late Sir William Treloar gave a Garden Fête at Chelsea at which I had a stall, His Majesty on shaking hands with me said, "I think, Mrs. Kendal, you must have given your best photographs to James Merrick."

Lady Dorothy Neville, who also heard of the case, was

another whose sympathy was so awakened on his behalf that she offered him a cottage on her estate for some weeks, on condition that he did not leave it until after dark.

His Royal Highness the late Duke of Cambridge gave him a silver watch.

Many years ago, remembering what I had done for Merrick, Sir Frederick Treves came to me and said that he had a leper patient whom he was anxious to send to the Rothschild Leper Hospital at Berck, near Boulogne, and asked me to get him in.

I accordingly called on Lady Rosebery, whom I did not know at the time, and succeeded in getting her to recommend the man for admission.

In undertaking to do what I could, Sir Frederick made one definite pronouncement,—that on no account was I to allow the patient to write to me, “for,” he said, “if you get letters from him, as you did from James Merrick, I don’t know what harm might occur.”

As may be supposed, I very often received appeals to help members of my own profession. One which I always regarded as the strangest to come to me was from Mrs. John Billington, herself a distinguished actress, who had played with Miss Mary Anderson at the Lyceum and was the widow of a noted actor who acted parts of the first importance with Mr. Toole.

I had never met Mrs. Billington professionally, but one day I received a letter from her soliciting my assistance and I thought it better to go and see her.

When I was shown into her sitting-room, she raised her eyes and said, “So you have come. They say you’re a good woman, so I have sent for you to know what you and the profession are going to do for me, as I am in great need.”

In the course of conversation I recalled that Mr. Toole had left her husband three thousand pounds, the greater part if not the whole of which must have come to her.

“That’s all spent and more, so the profession must do something for me, and you must tell them so.”

Pondering how I could help or what I could do, I left her. Suddenly, it occurred to me to write to the late Miss Charlotte Knollys, Queen Alexandra's confidential secretary, to ask if she would ask Her Majesty to give her name as a patroness as I wanted to get up a subscription privately for Mrs. Billington, whom Her Majesty must have seen, as she had admired Miss Anderson so much.

In reply, I received a cheque from the Marquis of Ripon stating that he had been commanded by the Queen to send ten pounds. Heartened with this response, I sat down and wrote to every duke, earl and viscount in the peerage.

The result of my appeal was that I raised eight hundred pounds without a word appearing in the press.

I went to Sir Douglas Straight and asked him to become one of the trustees with Sir Herbert Tree as the other, and the money was lodged in one of the Branches of the Westminster Bank.

Everything being arranged, I went to Mrs. Billington and said, "I've secured an engagement for you at a salary of five pounds a week."

"Who's the manager?" she asked.

"That," I replied, "is a secret. You will never get more than five pounds a week, but you will never get less, and it will be paid to you every Saturday morning."

It was paid until her death, when there was enough money in the fund to bury her, pay her debts, and leave a surplus of twenty-eight pounds which was given to her niece.

Sir Douglas Straight and Sir Herbert Tree then shook hands and we tore up the "Billington" documents.

In 1922 when Sir Edward Cecil Moore was Lord Mayor, I was asked to plead at a public meeting in aid of the Beneficent Fund for Poor Gentlewomen.

In the middle of my speech somebody in the body of the hall sent up a golden sovereign to me. As I looked at it I saw that it bore the effigy of our well-loved Queen Victoria. Kissing it, I exclaimed, "Great lady, plead with me," and turning to the audience I said, "I put this sovereign up for auction."

It was bought for ten pounds. About four days afterwards I received a letter from some kind friend in the country enclosing me another Queen Victoria sovereign. She wrote : " Directly I got home after hearing you speak I searched for this and found it. Do with it for your charity as you did with the other."

I telephoned to Mr. Hussey, the secretary of the society, and said I had got another sovereign. To my surprise he said, " Do be careful or you'll get into trouble. At the meeting the Lord Mayor might have put you into a cell, as no one in the reign of King George is allowed to sell money that does not bear his effigy. Please, therefore, send the sovereign back."

That afternoon the Lady Mayoress had a party to which I had been invited. I put on my new bonnet, made myself look as nice as I could and asked the Lord Mayor if he could really have sent me into a dark cell. His reply was, " Certainly, as the Lord Mayor I can do many things."

Standing beside me was the late Sir William Treloar, whom I had known many years, so I asked him if he would have punished me in that way. His reply was, " You got very near meriting it by selling counterfeit coins." His remark was made with very grave lips, but with a twinkle in his eye, so I said nothing.

Whenever I want to understand what people really mean I always look at their eyes. They are the only features which they cannot control, as they are in juxtaposition with the brain. Does not Hamlet say that one can " smile and smile and be a villain " ? while another poet says,

A face can beguile
With a frown or a smile,
But the test of affection's
A tear.

If anybody wants to buy the sovereign attached to this story, it still lies in a cabinet in my flat and the Poor Gentlemen's Fund may benefit by another ten pounds.

CHAPTER XVI

HONOURS

NBODY could have been more surprised than I was at the title His Majesty the King bestowed on me in the birthday honours of June 1926.

I only heard the circumstances under which it came about some time after the event. When Mr. Baldwin, who was then Prime Minister, had made up his list of honours to present to the King, he invited three gentlemen to dine with him. They were the late Sir James Agg-Gardner, Rear-Admiral Sueter and Mr. (now Sir) Archibald Boyd-Carpenter. He showed them the list, and, saying it had to go to the King within forty-eight hours, he asked if they thought he had forgotten anyone.

"Surely Mrs. Kendal's name ought to be included," said one of the gentlemen.

Next day I received a letter from Mr. Baldwin telling me my name was on the Prime Minister's list.

I was by no means certain of the course that I ought to adopt, for my dear husband was dead and honours in which he and I did not share seemed to me rather sad to bear. I determined, however, to take the most unbiassed advice I could find, so I took Mr. Baldwin's letter to General Sir Bindon Blood, whose wife is a great friend of mine, and asked him to give me his opinion and advice.

Sir Bindon read the letter and said, "This is a great honour. You cannot possibly refuse it."

A fortnight went by without my hearing anything further and I came to the conclusion I should not. I arranged to go to Brighton for a change, and on the morning I was to

start—the luggage was already on my car and I was actually settling myself in it when a footman arrived with a bouquet and a letter. They were from her late Royal Highness, the Princess Royal, the King's sister, of whom I was devotedly fond. She wrote: "Let me be the first to call you by your new title."

I had to get out of the car in order to write and thank her.

"Fetch me a morning paper," I said to one of the maids.

"But, madam, you have no papers this morning, for you countermanded them yesterday, as you were going to Brighton so early to-day."

I sent immediately for a copy of *The Times* and saw that my appointment as a D.B.E. was officially announced.

Next to the honour the King conferred on me was, I think, the honour done to me by Her Majesty the Queen.

When I was quite young, the Duchess of Cambridge, the Queen's grandmother, gave me a bracelet. It was made of bits of lapis lazuli set in alternate links of gold, like a sailor's cable chain.

After my husband's death, when I was making my Will, I wondered who would care for this jewel and it suddenly occurred to me that, perhaps, Her Majesty might like this memento of her grandmother and I wrote to Sir Edmund Waddington, and asked the question.

In reply, he said the Queen would be very pleased. I therefore sent it immediately, and Her Majesty sent me a message personally expressing her pleasure at my giving her so interesting a souvenir.

Strange as it may appear, my husband would have had a peerage when we first went to America if one of its citizens could have had his own way. This was Mr. Stephen Fiske, the editor of the *New York Sports of the Times*, to whom my husband had been of some service when they had met years before in London.

Soon after we arrived in New York he said to my husband, "You ought to be Lord Kendal, and Lord Kendal I make

you." As "Lord Kendal" he always addressed my husband.

Some years later, it was at Christmas-time 1907, he referred in his paper to the fact that a Dr. George Sullivan of Tarrytown who had recently died,

was the last heir to the estate of Lord Kendal of the British Peerage. The title is now extinct and the estate reverts to the crown. He leaves no male line and this affords the generous King Edward a grand opportunity to lift the grand old title from disuse and award one of his most loyal, talented and popular servants by raising W. H. Kendal, the famous actor and manager, to the peerage. I am aware Kendal is a stage name, but so was Irving. Much less prominent actors have been knighted during King Edward's brilliant reign, but we have, as yet, no player peer and the coincidence of name and title suggests the honour for Mr. Kendal.

Four years later, in the issue of his paper July 4th, 1911, he returned to the subject in the following paragraph :

The Kendals represent on both sides the aristocracy of the theatrical profession, and yet they are overlooked while unimportant jackanapes and character imitators are honoured. They have practically retired from the stage so that a title would be of no use to them as an advertisement and no doubt Mr. Kendal is prouder of being a Yorkshire squire,—his family name is Grimston,—than he would be of a new knighthood. But that is not the point. Titles are intended to do honour to the stage and those who have won most honour for the stage should receive them.

Long before Mr. Fiske dubbed my husband Lord Kendal, longer still before His Majesty made me a D.B.E., I might have had a title in my own right.

The possibility came when I was still in my teens and playing in "The Great City" at Drury Lane. For a quarter of an hour I had to sit, without speaking, on a box in the railway station scene and read a love letter.

I may confess now that, at that time, a certain young member of the peerage wanted me to marry him. Every night he sent me a letter in order that I might read it in the scene. "They must see you smile, Madge, so I will write a funny letter to you."

His attentions evoked the sympathy of my father who, one day, remonstrated with me for the attitude I was adopting towards this suitor. "Madge," he said, "if you continue on the stage and always have to, there will come a time when you will be very sorry you said 'no' to this young man who can give you a beautiful home and a title for the rest of your life."

"Father," I replied. "I don't like him well enough to marry him. He's a great swell, I know, and could give me a title, but I'm going to be a 'Rogue and a Vagabond' all my life; that's the title I shall always have."

"My dear," replied my father, "you were born with a title. No one will ever want to take it away from you. You will always keep it. You may put the letters after your name at any time and nobody will ever want to rob you of them."

"What are those letters?" I asked.

"A.S.S.," said my father.

When my father informed me of this title I naively asked him, "Why did you have me if I'm such an ass?"

"To amuse me, my dear."

"Do I always amuse you, daddy?"

"No, my child, very seldom."

My earliest recollections of him are very distinct. He was very tall and I used to stand on a chair to tie his cravat which was made of black satin with a slit at the back through which the strings were pulled and tied in a bow under his chin.

If I tied it well and did not keep him waiting he would say, "Good child, I'm glad I had you." If I kept him waiting he would say, "A. double S."

In frankness of speech I sometimes think I resemble my dear father.

The years rolled on and after I had delivered my address at the Social Science Conference the press of England bestowed another title on me,—The Matron of the British Drama.

I wonder what my father would have said to that.

Even at that time I recalled a famous couplet written by Lord Byron on seeing a goose quill for the first time.

Plucked from a parent's breast to make a pen
Thou mighty instrument for little men.

Well, it was some of those "little men" that gave me that title. I think it was meant as an insult, for I was too young to be a matron, but the title awarded to me by the press I have always treated as a compliment, for I was very glad to be the mother of so large a family as the dramatic profession then,—three thousand strong; now it is thirty thousand.

What a family to love me!

Although we have it on the best authority that "a prophet is not without honour save in his own country and in his own house," the Borough of Grimsby flatly contradicted it on Tuesday, July 26th, 1932, and the *Grimsby Daily Telegraph* flared across its front page in large type, "Honour for Grimsby's great and gracious actress," and announced, "Dame Madge Kendal receives honorary freedom of the Borough with Alderman Knott."

Nobody will, I hope, accuse me of undue pride if I say that, with

Roses, roses all the way
With myrtle mixed in my path, like mad,

I regarded it as one of the chief honours in my life. That is why it is included in this chapter.

The distinction was the more gratifying, for I was the first woman to be so honoured, and Grimsby's freemen even now number only five.

Perhaps as a woman I am proud of the fact that the first suggestion that the honour should be accorded me was due to another woman, Miss D. Clapham, one of the borough magistrates.

It was a remarkable gathering, for the body of the hall was filled with members of the council, the ex-mayors and

COUNTY BOROUGH OF GRIMSBY

AT a Special Meeting of the Town Council of the County Borough of Grimsby held in the Town Hall Grimsby on the 24th day of June 1932 it was Moved by the Mayor the following Resolution

RESOLVED

THAT this Council in pursuance of and in accordance with the provisions contained in the Honorary Freedom of Boroughs Act, 1885, confer upon Dame MADGE KENDAL-GRIMSTON D. B. E.

the Honorary Freedom of the County Borough of Grimsby and hereby admit her to the Honorary Freedom of the County Borough of Grimsby accordingly.

of their high appreciation of her sterling character and illustrious attainments,

B. W. Dixon
Mayor

John Graham
Town Clerk



THE BEGINNING AND ENDING OF THE ILLUMINATED ADDRESS PRESENTED BY THE BOROUGH OF GRIMSBY—THE BIRTHPLACE OF DAME MADGE KENDAL

aldermen in their robes and the magistrates and many well-known citizens.

The illuminated copy of the resolution passed by the council admitting me to the honorary freedom was enclosed in a casket and I learned with the pride of a Lincolnshire woman that in addition to being the greatest fishing port in the world Grimsby's first charter was granted in 1291 by King John. I may, therefore, be pardoned if I quote from the speech I had to make on that occasion : " In recalling the event I have a strange and curious feeling of exaltation tempered by the many struggles, hopes, fears, ambitions, bitter disappointments, the sources of griefs that a long life like mine must mean, for, as you know, we are ' what dreams are made of.' "

But that day was no dream, it was true reality.

One poignant recollection I have of the ceremony was when one of the councillors, in his scarlet robes of office, rose with a large sheet of paper in his hand and I had to listen for half an hour or more while he read the record of my professional career which, slightly altering the famous line of Shakespeare, proved that,

One woman in her time plays many parts.

CHAPTER XVII

SITTING IN A GARDEN

LOOKING backwards over the years that are gone, —“where are the snows of yesteryear?”—experience has taught me the truth of those wonderful words, “Many friends cannot profit, nor strong helpers assist, nor books of the learned offer comfort.”

Yet I have had many friends, some in the high places of the world, some in the low, but, low or high, they are bound to me by the same feeling,—love.

It is a wonderful beautifier of the soul, as soap and water is of the body.

That reminds me that one day a lady of a curious temperament asked me, “What do you wash your face with? It always looks so fresh.”

“With soap and water,” I always quoted. “God does the rest.”

Earlier in my career Lord Frederick Hamilton, when I met him at lunch one day, remarked how well I was looking and asked how I managed it.

“My dear Lord Frederick,” I replied, “I try to fill up my wrinkles with intelligence.”

When lunch was over, he came to me and taking a pencil out of his pocket and pulling his stiff shirt cuff down to make a note of my reply said, “What was that you said about wrinkles before lunch, that Providence sent them?”

“Yes,” I answered. “Providence sends them, but I do my best to fill them up with intelligence.”

“Well, if it is true, you have succeeded to a great extent in that regard. I shall put that in my book.”

And he did.

Even to-day, in spite of my age, my hair is still brown, although some people might call it "dandy-grey-russet."

I mention this fact because, at the end of April of this year of grace 1933, I went to Brighton to be present at a recital that brilliant artist, Miss Ruth Draper, was giving to help the New Sussex Hospital for Women at Backsettown in which I have been interested for a long time. On my return home, a friend wrote a delightful letter to me in which he said that Lord B., who was present, had said to him he thought it was a great pity that I did not wear my own grey hair and added he felt sure "your beautiful brown hair must be a wig. How I laughed and how you will laugh at it."

This question of my wearing a wig dates back many years.

It was just after we had returned from our second tour in the United States, and a journalist commenting on the fact wrote: "The Kendals have returned to London, and Mrs. Kendal has bought herself a new brown wig."

Mr. Kendal wrote to the gentleman and asked him to call.

He was shown into my husband's study and when they were comfortably seated and talking together I went in.

My husband convinced the journalist that my hair was not a wig and turning to him said, "I think your statement about my wife's wig is as near the truth as some of the members of the press are able to get,—they are never able to distinguish between actors and authors,—and hair."

My husband then handed our visitor a nice big cigar and when he left we parted as brothers and sister.

I think I owe my hair which has still kept on my head to my dear mother.

Like my hair, I still possess my own teeth, so that I am not liable to such an accident as befell Lord Houghton on one occasion when he was the guest of the Royal Academy at its annual whitebait dinner at Greenwich. On that evening my husband and I were invited by Lord Granville

to the House of Commons when the Prince and Princess of Wales (King Edward and Queen Alexandra) were present.

The Royal Academy boat drew up by the terrace that the Academicians might have the opportunity of making their bow to their Royal Highnesses and Lord Houghton bowed so low that his false teeth fell out and dropped into the river.

I don't think I ever heard such laughter as there was on that terrace. Even after the boat had gone and the Prince and Princess sat down to refreshment, the Prince was still laughing. "Poor Houghton, poor Houghton; he'll never find his teeth again."

Far removed from princes and the great and successful ones of the world, in the peace of my cottage in Hertfordshire, where I write this final chapter, I find the birds very akin to humanity. They are always looking and finding food for their young. They fight over a piece too large to carry away and, when the battle is over, one goes off with the larger portion of what has been destroyed in the *mêlée*.

The blackbird is the most faithful husband among them all and sings such beautiful notes from the moment he is told he is going to be a father until the babies are born. He is a great soother and helpmate.

Birds, I am sure, know nothing of the divorce court,—except the cuckoo.

The divorce court becomes more overworked every year than the year before.

I am glad I lived in Queen Victoria's time, for Her Majesty disliked divorce.

"Isn't it hard on the innocent person," Lord Melbourne, then Her Majesty's Prime Minister, asked her, "to have to suffer because he or she has been compelled to bring an action for divorce?"

"I am no judge, Lord Melbourne," said the Queen. "Nor can you be, either. We do not reside with those

people, but we do know that the innocent suffer for the guilty. If people go to the divorce court, they cannot come to mine."

To-day, however, the public reaction to divorce is far less stringent than it was. I recall, for instance, when that wonderful singer Adelina Patti was divorced by the Marquis de Caux and married Signor Nicolini whose name was associated with hers in the proceedings, that when she came on the platform of the Albert Hall she was loudly applauded, but the moment his voice was heard in the duet they were to sing, the audience became uproarious in its hostile demonstrations and repeated that manifestation when he appeared.

Even in the case of Edmund Kean, great actor though he was, his public was strongly disaffected towards him when he, too, was divorced and that in spite of the fact that the public is, and was, constantly told in the press it has no right to know anything about the private life of those in public life. The anomaly of the situation is that it is "the press" which always probes into people's private life and makes its incidents public.

But let me return to my cottage. There my lovebirds in their cages always seem to be in the ardour of their first romance and kiss each other all day long. Their life seems one long honeymoon.

I have also a Hartz mountain canary who understands everything I tell it, and another canary who is so straitlaced she lays very tiny blue eggs, all by herself. I often talk to her about it and she talks to me. She believes in Miss Marie Stopes. A favourite verse of hers runs :

Sister Susie built her hopes
On the books of Marie Stopes.
But I fear from her condition
She must have read the wrong edition.

Birds do not like aeroplanes. Even before I can see or hear them, the birds are so disturbed that they flutter

their wings and fly about their cages, while the birds flying among the trees are still startled by the noise.

I cannot help thinking that if God had meant people to fly He'd have given them wings.

I have a single-handed cook who sets the wireless when she is alone as she "likes company." Sir Harry Lauder and Mr. Wilkie Bard I regard now as brothers and I can sing some of their songs.

Old age has its compensations !

My garden is a schoolmaster, but an uplifting one. It gives hope and teaches patience. You put a tiny living seed into the ground and eventually, from it, by some magic process, a stem and leaves and flowers,—yellow, blue, pink, every radiant hue ; every exquisite shape,—appear ; they are all so different, like human beings, with different coloured centres, like hearts. Some love the rain ; some curl up to avoid it ; but they all love the sunshine. Everything in a garden is a teacher and Nature, though changeable, is, *au fond*, always the same, and follows tradition.

The new roses are wonderful to look at, but the old-fashioned cabbage rose smells the sweetest, and retains its perfume, like the old actors who knew their work and made their points.

I suspect that if you were to speak to one of the popular actors of to-day about making points, he would not know how to do it, and I should not be surprised if he did not even know what it means.

It is, however, a very valuable asset, as, properly used, it enables the player to so emphasise a line or phrase that it wins instant recognition from the audience in the shape of laughter or applause or even an adverse demonstration if the effect is produced by the villain in a melodrama.

One of the finest "point actresses" of my time was Mrs. John Wood, a very handsome woman, with wonderful black hair and an endowment of great vitality. In the early farces of Sir Arthur Pinero which were produced at

the Court Theatre, she gave inimitable examples of this skill. In "The Magistrate," for instance, she had one speech of only three words,—“Same old gown.” At first sight there would not appear to be very much comic material in these words, but the way she spoke them stopped the play with laughter. She looked the wearer slowly up and down from head to feet, from feet to head, paused and turned her eyes away, then repeated the action and finally spoke the words with a certain pitying commiseration.

The result was electrical.

Of course, the modern school would despise this kind of thing, but how the audiences would relish it, for audiences respond to the human note whether the date is A.D. 1933 or A.D. 1883.

Once and once only, as I remember, Mrs. John Wood and I met on the same stage. This was at a *matinée* at the Gaiety Theatre when we played in Douglas Jerrold's "Black-Eyed Susan," and she acted the comic part, Dolly Mayflower, inimitably.

We camouflaged our ships during the war to deceive the enemy and now many women do the same to deceive mankind. Even their finger-nails are in disguise, as if we were returning to those primitive times when the early Britons used woad to make their bodies a lovely blue.

To-day, they get the sun to paint them a lovely tan. This camouflage is not confined to the young people.

When I consider the way ladies of sixty and sixty-five and even those ten years older dress and make up, I often think, "What gay dogs we old cats are."

I wonder if they ever look in the glass, or if they are prevented by the thought, "Conscience does make cowards of us all."

During the years of my greatest activity I lived for the stage, so let me take leave of my readers as "The Matron of the British Drama," and express the hope that the press will support me in the following heartfelt ideas.

Actors should only marry actresses who respect their work and can do without any press agent beyond stating that they will appear on such and such a date at such and such a theatre. If the public likes them the public will advertise them. Their attitude should be something akin to that embodied in Byron's famous line,

Man's love is of man's life, a thing apart.

If actors attend to the criticism of those who really do know how to criticise and do their best, the harvest will follow.

I entreat all actors to endeavour to keep up the high standards bequeathed by the great ones of the past as the followers of other professions do and to follow the tradition that has been tried, tested and found good. Goods in the shop window are very attractive, but the shopkeeper must have some stores in the cellar if he is to make a real success.

While ambition is the actor's goal, his watchword should be content. In contentment lies one's real happiness. At thirty you should know what you want to achieve and should work conscientiously until you are fifty to attain it. Then, think of others ; make way for them ; give them an opportunity and leave them your enthusiasm.

Have the independence of your opinion and the opinion of your independence with the courage to assert both.

Leave some footprints in the sands of time that others may follow easily along the path you have taken, and, above all, give encouragement to them.

The last words I spoke on the stage as the curtain fell were,

I did what I thought was right at the time.
Who can do more ?

As the Matron of the British Drama, I have given my maternal blessing to thirty thousand aspirants to the stage.

It is a large number. They cannot all play Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. Some of them must only be the friends invited to the banquet.

I wish I could inspire them with the enthusiasm of Edmund Kean, and give them the high nobility of thought of Fanny Kemble or the tragic power of Sarah Siddons.

But to all I say, work and with enthusiasm. Please remember, it is only by being straight you can keep from being crooked.

Respect the fact that you are called actors and actresses.

It is a great title if carried with respect to the Art.

Hang somewhere in your room these immortal words—the advice of a father to a son which applies equally from a mother to a daughter :

“To thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.”

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